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THE *John Adams*
ILLIAD
OF
HOMER.

TRANSLATED BY
ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

*Qui cupit optatam cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit, fecitque, puer——*

HOR.

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T H E

I L I A D.

B O O K XIX.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The reconciliation of Achilles and Agamemnon.

THE TIS brings to her son the armour made by Vulcan. She preserves the body of his friend from corruption, and commands him to assemble the army, to declare his resentment at an end. Agamemnon and Achilles are solemnly reconciled: the speeches, presents, and ceremonies on that occasion. Achilles is with great difficulty persuaded to refrain from the battle till the troops have refreshed themselves, by the advice of Ulysses. The presents are conveyed to the tent of Achilles; where Briseis laments over the body of Patroclus. The hero obstinately refuses all repast, and gives himself up to lamentations for his friend. Minerva descends to strengthen him, by the order of Jupiter. He arms for the fight: his appearance described. He addresses himself to his horses, and reproaches them with the death of Patroclus. One of them is miraculously endued with voice, and inspired to prophecy his fate; but the hero, not astonished by that prodigy, rushes with fury to the combat.

The thirtieth day. The scene is on the sea-shore.

SOON as Aurora heav'd her orient head
 Above the waves, that blush'd with early red,
 (With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,
 And gild the courts of heav'n with sacred light,)

Th' immortal arms the Goddess-mother bears 5
 Swift to her son: her son she finds in tears
 Stretch'd o'er Patroclus' corse; while all the rest
 Their sov'reign's sorrows in their own exprest.
 A ray divine her heav'nly presence shed,
 And thus, his hand soft-touching, Thetis said. 10

Suppress (my son) this rage of grief, and know
 It was not man, but heav'n that gave the blow;
 Behold what arms by Vulcan are bestow'd,
 Arms worthy thee, or fit to grace a God.

Then drops the radiant burden on the ground; 15
 Clang the strong arms, and ring the shores around:
 Back shrink the Myrmidons with dread surprize,
 And from the broad effulgence turn their eyes.
 Unmov'd, the hero kindles at the show,
 And feels with rage divine his bosom glow; 20
 From his fierce eye-balls living flames expire,
 And flash incessant like a stream of fire:
 He turns the radiant gift, and feeds his mind
 On all th' immortal artist had design'd.

Y. 13. *Behold what arms, etc.*] It is not poetry only which has had this idea, of giving divine arms to a hero; we have a very remarkable example of it in our holy books. In the second of Maccabees, chap. 16. Judas sees in a dream the prophet Jeremiah bringing to him a sword as from God: though this was only a dream, or a vision, yet still it is the same idea. This example is likewise so much the more worthy of observation, as it is much later than the age of Homer; and as thereby it is seen, that the same way of thinking continued a long time amongst the oriental nations. Dacier.

Goddeſs (he cry'd) theſe glorious arms that ſhine 25
With matchleſs art, confeſs the hand divine.

Now to the bloody battel let me bend:

But ah! the relics of my ſlaughter'd friend!

In thoſe wide wounds thro' which his ſpirit fled,
Shall flies, and worms obſcene, pollute the dead? 30

ψ. 30. *Shall flies, and worms obſcene, pollute the dead?*]
The care which Achilles takes in this place to drive away the flies from the dead body of Patroclus, ſeems to us a mean employment, and a care unworthy of a hero. But that office was regarded by Homer, and by all the Greeks of his time, as a pious duty conſecrated by cuſtom and religion; which obliged the kindred and friends of the deceaſed to watch his corps, and prevent any corruption before the ſolemn day of his funerals. It is plain this devoir was thought an indiſpenſable one, ſince Achilles could not diſcharge himſelf of it but by impoſing it upon his mother. It is alſo clear, that in thoſe times the preſervation of a dead body was accounted a very important matter, ſince the Goddeſſes themſelves, nay the moſt delicate of the Goddeſſes, made it the ſubject of their utmoſt attention. As Thetis preſerves the body of Patroclus, and chafes from it thoſe inſects that breed in the wounds and cauſe putrefaction, ſo Venus is employed day and night about that of Hector, in driving away the dogs to which Achilles had expoſed it. Apollo, on his part, covers it with a thick cloud, and preſerves its freſhneſs amidſt the greateſt heats of the ſun: and this care of the deities over the dead was looked upon by men as a fruit of their piety.

There is an excellent remark upon this paſſage in Boſſu's admirable treatiſe of the epic poem, lib. 3. c. 10.
" To ſpeak (ſays this author) of the arts and ſciences
" as a poet ought, we ſhould veil them under names
" and actions of perſons, fictitious, and allegorical.

That unavailing care be laid aside,
 (The azure Goddess to her son reply'd)
 Whole years untouch'd, uninjur'd shall remain
 Fresh as in life, the carcase of the slain.
 But go, Achilles, (as affairs require) 35
 Before the Grecian peers renounce thine ire:
 Then uncontroll'd in boundless war engage,
 And heav'n with strength supply the mighty rage!

Then in the nostrils of the slain she pour'd
 Nectareous drops, and rich ambrosia shower'd 40
 O'er all the corse. The flies forbid their prey,
 Untouch'd it rests, and sacred from decay.
 Achilles to the strand obedient went:
 The shores resounded with the voice he sent.
 The heroes heard, and all the naval train 45
 That tend the ships, or guide them o'er the main,

“ Homer will not plainly say that salt has the virtue to
 “ preserve dead bodies, and prevent the flies from en-
 “ gendering worms in them; he will not say, that the
 “ sea presented Achilles a remedy to preserve Patroclus
 “ from putrefaction; but he will make the sea a God-
 “ dess, and tell us, that Thetis to comfort Achilles,
 “ engaged to perfume the body with an ambrosia which
 “ should keep it a whole year from corruption: it is
 “ thus Homer teaches the poets to speak of arts and
 “ sciences. This example shews the nature of the
 “ things, that flies cause putrefaction, that salt preserves
 “ bodies from it; but all this is told us poetically, the
 “ whole is reduced into action, the sea is made a per-
 “ son who speaks and acts, and this prosopopœia is ac-
 “ companied with passion, tenderness, and affection;
 “ in a word, there is nothing which is not (according
 “ to Aristotle's precept) endued with manners.”

Alarm'd, transported, at the well known sound,
Frequent and full, the great assembly crown'd ;
Studious to see that terror of the plain,
Long lost to battel, shine in arms again. 50

Tydides and Ulysses first appear,
Lame with their wounds, and leaning on the spear ;
These on the sacred seats of council plac'd,
The king of men, Atrides came the last :
He too fore wounded by Agenor's son. 55
Achilles (rising in the midst) begun.

O monarch ! better far had been the fate
Of thee, of me, of all the Grecian state,
If (ere the day when by mad passion sway'd,
Rash we contended for the black ey'd maid) 60
Preventing Dian had dispatch'd her dart,
And shot the shining mischief to the heart !

ψ. 61. *Preventing Dian had dispatch'd her dart,
And shot the shining mischief to the heart.]*

Achilles wishes Briseis had died before she had occasioned so great calamities to his countrymen: I will not say, to excuse him, that his virtue here overpowers his love, but that the wish is not so very barbarous as it may seem by the phrase to a modern reader. It is not, that Diana had actually killed her, as by a particular stroke or judgment from heaven ; it means no more than a natural death, as appears from this passage in Odyss. 15.

*When age and sickness have unnerv'd the strong,
Apollo comes, and Cynthia comes along,
They bend the silver bows for sudden ill,
And every shining arrow flies to kill.*

Then many a hero had not press'd the shore,
 Nor Troy's glad fields been fatten'd with our gore:
 Long, long shall Greece the woes we caus'd, bewail, 65
 And sad posterity repeat the tale.

But this, no more the subject of debate,
 Is past, forgotten, and resign'd to fate:
 Why should (alas) a mortal man, as I,
 Burn with a fury that can never die? 70

Here then my anger ends: let war succeed,
 And ev'n as Greece has bled, let Ilion bleed.
 Now call the hosts, and try, if in our sight,
 Troy yet shall dare to camp a second night?
 I deem, their mightiest, when this arm he knows, 75
 Shall 'scape with transport, and with joy repose.

He said: his finish'd wrath with loud acclaim
 The Greeks accept, and shout Pelides' name.
 When thus, not rising from his lofty throne,
 In state unmov'd, the king of men begun. 80

Hear me, ye sons of Greece! with silence hear!
 And grant your monarch an impartial ear;
 A while your loud, untimely joy suspend,
 And let your rash, injurious clamours end:
 Unruly murmurs, or ill-tim'd applause, 85
 Wrong the best speaker, and the justest cause.
 Nor charge on me, ye Greeks, the dire debate:
 Know, angry Jove, and all-compelling Fate,

And he does not wish her death now, after she had
 been his mistress, but only that she had died, before he
 knew, or loved her.

With fell Erinnyes, urg'd my wrath that day
 When from Achilles' arms I forc'd the prey. 90
 What then could I, against the will of heav'n?
 Not by myself, but vengeful Ate driv'n;
 She, Jove's dread daughter, fated to infest
 The race of mortals, enter'd in my breast.

ψ. 93. *She, Jove's dread daughter.*] This speech of Agamemnon, consisting of little else than the long story of Jupiter's casting Discord out of heaven, seems odd enough at first sight; and does not indeed answer what I believe every reader expects, at the conference of these two princes. Without excusing it from the justness and proper application of the allegory in the present case, I think it a piece of artifice, very agreeable to the character of Agamemnon, which is a mixture of haughtiness and cunning; he cannot prevail with himself any way to lessen the dignity of the royal character, of which he every where appears jealous: something he is obliged to say in public, and not brooking directly to own himself in the wrong, he flurs it over with this tale. With what stateliness is it that he yields! "I was misled, (says he) but I was misled like Jupiter. We invest you with our powers, take our troops and our treasures: our royal promise shall be fulfilled, but be you pacified."

ψ. 93. *She, Jove's dread daughter, fated to infest
 The race of mortals———]*

It appears from hence, that the ancients owned a Dæmon, created by God himself, and totally taken up in doing mischief.

This fiction is very remarkable, in as much as it proves that the Pagans knew that a dæmon of discord and malediction was in heaven, and afterwards precipitated to earth, which perfectly agrees with holy history. St. Justin will have it, that Homer attained to the knowlege thereof in Ægypt, and that he had even read

Not on the ground that hanghty fury treads, 95
 But prints her lofty footsteps on the heads
 Of mighty men ; inflicting as she goes
 Long fest'ring wounds, inextricable woes !
 Of old, she stalk'd amid the bright abodes ;
 And Jove himself, the fire of men and Gods, 100
 The world's great ruler, felt her venom'd dart ;
 Deceiv'd by Juno's wiles, and female art ;
 For when Alcmena's nine long months were run,
 And Jove expected his immortal son ;
 To gods and goddesses th' unruly joy 105
 He show'd, and vaunted of his matchless boy :
 From us (he said) this day an infant springs,
 Fated to rule, and born a king of kings.
 Saturnia ask'd an oath, to vouch the truth,
 And fix dominion on the favour'd youth. 110
 The thund'rer unsuspecting of the fraud,
 Pronounc'd those solemn words that bind a God.
 The joyful Goddess, from Olympus' height,
 Swift to Achaian Argos bent her flight ;

what Isaiah writes, chap. 14. *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning, how art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the nations ?* But our poet could not have seen the prophecy of Isaiah, because he lived 100, or 150 years before that prophet ; and this anteriority of time makes this passage the more observable. Homer therein bears authentic witness to the truth of the story, of an angel thrown from heaven, and gives this testimony above 100 years before one of the greatest prophets spoke of it. Dacier.

Scarce sev'n moons gone, lay Sthenelus his wife; 115

She push'd her ling'ring infant into life:

Her charms Alcmena's coming labours stay,

And stop the babe, just issuing to the day.

Then bids Saturnius bear his oath in mind;

" A youth (said she) of Jove's immortal kind 120

" Is this day born: from Sthenelus he springs,

" And claims thy promise to be king of kings.

Grief seiz'd the thund'rer, by his oath engag'd;

Stung to the soul, he sorrow'd, and he rag'd.

From his ambrosial head, where perch'd she sate, 125

He snatch'd the fury-Goddeſs of Debate,

The dread, th' irrevocable oath he swore,

Th' immortal ſeats ſhould ne'er behold her more;

And whirl'd her headlong down, for ever driv'n

From bright Olympus and the ſtarry heav'n: 130

Thence on the nether world the fury fell;

Ordain'd with man's contentious race to dwell.

Full oft' the God his ſon's hard toils bemoan'd,

Curs'd the dire fury, and in ſecret groan'd.

Ev'n thus, like Jove himſelf, was I miſſed, 135

While raging Hector heap'd our camps with dead.

What can the errors of my rage atone?

My martial troops, my treaſures are thy own:

This inſtant from the navy ſhall be ſent

Whate'er Ulyſſes promis'd at thy tent: 140

But thou! appeas'd, propitious to our pray'r,

Reſume thy arms, and ſhine again in war.

O king of nations! whose superior sway
 (Returns Achilles) all our hosts obey!
 To keep or send the presents, be thy care; 145
 To us, 'tis equal: all we ask is war.
 While yet we talk, or but an instant shun
 The fight, our glorious work remains undone.
 Let ev'ry Greek, who sees my spear confound
 The Trojan ranks, and deal destruction round, 150
 With emulation, what I act, survey,
 And learn from thence the business of the day,
 The son of Peleus thus: and thus replies
 The great in councils, Ithacus the wise.
 Tho' godlike thou art by no toils oppress'd, 155
 At least our armies claim repast and rest:
 Long and laborious must the combat be,
 When by the Gods inspir'd, and led by thee.
 Strength is deriv'd from spirits and from blood,
 And those augment by gen'rous wine and food; 160

ψ. 145. *To keep or send the presents be thy care.*] Achilles neither refuses nor demands Agamemnon's presents: the first would be too contemptuous, and the other would look too selfish. It would seem as if Achilles fought only for pay like a mercenary, which would be utterly unbecoming a hero, and dishonourable to that character: Homer is wonderful as to the manners. Spond. Dacier.

ψ. 159. *Strength is deriv'd from spirits, etc.*] This advice of Ulysses, that the troops should refresh themselves with eating and drinking, was extremely necessary after a battel of so long continuance as that of the day before: and Achilles's desire that they should charge the enemy immediately,

What boastful son of war, without that stay,
 Can last a hero thro' a single day?
 Courage may prompt; but, ebbing out his strength,
 Mere unsupported man must yield at length;
 Shrunk with dry famine, and with toils declin'd, 165
 The dropping body will desert the mind:
 But built a-new with strength-conferring fare,
 With limbs and soul untam'd, he tires a war.
 Dismiss the people then, and give command,
 With strong repast to hearten ev'ry band; 170
 But let the presents to Achilles made,
 In full assembly of all Greece be laid.
 The king of men shall rise in public fight,
 And solemn swear (observant of the rite)
 That spotless as she came, the maid removes, 175
 Pure from his arms, and guiltless of his loves.
 That done, a sumptuous banquet shall be made,
 And the full price of injur'd honour paid.

immediately, without any reflection on the necessity of that refreshment, was also highly natural to his violent character. This forces Ulysses to repeat that advice, and insist upon it so much: which those critics did not see into, who through a false delicacy are shocked at his insisting so warmly upon eating and drinking. Indeed to a common reader who is more fond of heroic and romantic, than of just and natural images, this at first sight may have an air of ridicule; but I'll venture to say there is nothing ridiculous in the thing itself, nor mean and low in Homer's manner of expressing it: and I believe the same of this translation, though I have not softened or abated of the idea they are so offended with.

Stretch not henceforth, O prince! thy sov'reign might,
Beyond the bounds of reason and of right; 180

'Tis the chief praise that e'er to kings belong'd
To right with justice whom with pow'r they wrong'd.

To him the monarch. Just is thy decree,
Thy words give joy, and wisdom breathes in thee.
Each due atonement gladly I prepare; 185
And heav'n regard me as I justly swear!

Here then a while let Greece assembled stay,
Nor great Achilles grudge this short delay;
'Till from the fleet our presents be convey'd,
And, Jove attesting, the firm compact made. 190

A train of noble youth the charge shall bear;
These to select, Ulysses, be thy care:
In order rank'd let all our gifts appear,
And the fair train of captives close the rear:

Talthybius shall the victim bear convey, 195
Sacred to Jove, and yon' bright orb of day,

For this (the stern Æacides replies)
Some less important season may suffice,

ψ. 197. *The stern Æacides replies.*] The Greek verse is,

Τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς.

Which is repeated very frequently throughout the Iliad. It is a very just remark of a French critic, that what makes it so much taken notice of, is the rumbling sound and length of the word ἀπαμειβόμενος: this is so true, that if in a poem or romance of the same length as the Iliad, we should repeat *The hero answered*, full as often, we should never be sensible of that repetition. And if we are not shocked at the like frequency of those ex-

When the stern fury of the war is o'er,
And wrath extinguish'd burns my breast no more. 200

pressions in the *Æneid*, *sic ore refert, talia voce refert, talia dicta dabat, vix ea fatus erat*, etc. it is only because the sound of the Latin words does not fill the ear like that of the Greek ἀπαμειβόμενος.

The discourse of the same critic upon these sort of repetitions in general, deserves to be transcribed. That useless nicety (says he) of avoiding every repetition, which the delicacy of later times has introduced, was not known to the first ages of antiquity: the books of Moses abound with them. Far from condemning their frequent use in the most ancient of all the poets, we should look upon them as the certain character of the age in which he lived: they spoke so in his time, and to have spoken otherwise had been a fault. And indeed nothing is in itself so contrary to the true sublime, as that painful and frivolous exactness, with which we avoid to make use of a proper word because it was used before. It is certain that the Romans were less scrupulous as to this point: you have often in a single page of Tully, the same word five or six times over. If it were really a fault, it is not to be conceived how an author who so little wanted variety of expressions as Homer, could be so very negligent herein. On the contrary, he seems to have affected to repeat the same things in the same words, on many occasions.

It was from two principles equally true, that among several people, and in several ages, two practices intirely different took their rise. Moses, Homer, and the writers of the first times, had found that repetitions of the same words recalled the ideas of things, imprinted them much more strongly, and rendered the discourse more intelligible. Upon this principle, the custom of repeating words, phrases, and even intire speeches, insensibly established itself both in prose and poetry, especially in narrations.

By Hector slain, their faces to the sky,
All grim with gaping wounds, our heroes lie:

The writers who succeeded them observed, even from Homer himself, that the greatest beauty of style consisted in variety. This they made their principle: they therefore avoided repetitions of words, and still more of whole sentences; they endeavoured to vary their transitions; and found out new turns and manners of expressing the same things.

Either of these practices is good, but the excess of either vicious: we should neither on the one hand, through a love of simplicity and clearness, continually repeat the same words, phrases, or discourses; nor on the other, for the pleasure of variety, fall into a childish affectation of, expressing every thing twenty different ways, though it be never so natural and common.

Nothing so much cools the warmth of a piece, or puts out the fire of poetry, as that perpetual care to vary incessantly even in the smallest circumstances. In this, as in many other points, Homer has despised the ungrateful labour of too scrupulous a nicety. He has done like a great painter, who does not think himself obliged to vary all his pieces to that degree, as not one of them shall have the least resemblance to another: if the principal figures are intirely different, we easily excuse a resemblance in the landscapes, the skies, or the draperies. Suppose a gallery full of pictures, each of which represents a particular subject: in one I see Achilles in fury, menacing Agamemnon; in another the same hero with regret delivers up Briseis to the heralds; in a third it is still Achilles, but Achilles overcome with grief, and lamenting to his mother. If the air, the gesture, the countenance, the character of Achilles, are the same in each of these three pieces: if the ground of one of these be the same with that of the others in the composition and general design, whether it be landscape or architecture; then indeed one should have reason to

Those call to war ! and might my voice incite,
 Now, now, this instant shou'd commence the fight.
 Then, when the day's complete, let gen'rous bowls, 205
 And copious banquets, glad your weary souls.
 Let not my palate know the taste of food,
 'Till my insatiate rage be cloy'd with blood:
 Pale lies my friend, with wounds disfigur'd o'er,
 And his cold feet are pointed to the door. 210

blame the painter for the uniformity of his figures and grounds. But if there be no sameness but in the folds of a few draperies, in the structure of some part of a building, or in the figure of some tree, mountain, or cloud, it is what no one would regard as a fault. The application is obvious: Homer repeats, but they are not the great strokes which he repeats, not those which strike and fix our attention: they are only the little parts, the transitions, the general circumstances, or familiar images, which recur naturally, and upon which the reader but casts his eye carelessly: such as the descriptions of sacrifices, repasts, or embarkements: such in short, as are in their own nature much the same, which it is sufficient just to shew, and which are in a manner incapable of different ornaments.

ψ. 209. *Pale lies my friend, etc.*] It is in the Greek, *lies extended in my tent with his face turning towards the door*, ἄρα πρόθυρον τετραμμένος, that is to say, as the scholiast has explained it, *having his feet turned towards the door*. For it was thus the Greeks placed their dead in the porches of their houses, as likewise in Italy.

In portam rigidos calces extendit. Persius.

————— *Recepitque ad limina gressum*

Corpus ubi exanimi positum Pallantis Acetes

Servabat senior —————

Revenge is all my soul! no meaner care,
 Int'rest, or thought, has room to harbour there;
 Destruction be my feast, and mortal wounds,
 And scenes of blood, and agonizing sounds.

O first of Greeks (Ulysses thus rejoin'd) 215
 The best and bravest of the warrior-kind!
 Thy praise it is in dreadful camps to shine,
 But old experience and calm wisdom, mine.
 Then hear my counsel, and to reason yield,
 The bravest soon are satiate of the field; 220
 Tho' vast the heaps that strow the crimson plain,
 The bloody harvest brings but little gain:
 The scale of conquest ever wav'ring lies,
 Great Jove but turns it, and the victor dies!
 The great, the bold, by thousands daily fall, 225
 And endless were the grief, to weep for all.
 Eternal sorrows what avails to shed?
 Greece honours not with solemn fasts the dead:
 Enough, when death demands the brave, to pay
 The tribute of a melancholy day. 230

Thus we are told by Suetonius, of the body of Augustus
 — *Equester ordo suscepit, urbiq; intulit, atque in vestibulo domus collocavit.*

ψ. 221. *Tho' vast the heaps, etc.*] Ulysses's expression in the original is very remarkable; he calls καλάμην, *straw or chaff*, such as are killed in the battel; and he calls ἀμνητον, the *crop*, such as make their escape. This is very conformable to the language of holy scripture, wherein those who perish are called *chaff*, and those who are saved are called *corn*. Dacier.

One chief with patience to the grave resign'd,
 Our care devolves on others left behind.
 Let gen'rous food supplies of strength produce,
 Let rising spirits flow from sprightly juice,
 Let their warm heads with scenes of battel glow, 235
 And pour new furies on the feebler foe.
 Yet a short interval, and none shall dare
 Expect a second summons to the war;
 Who waits for that, the dire effect shall find,
 If trembling in the ships he lags behind. 240
 Embodied, to the battel let us bend,
 And all at once on haughty Troy descend.

And now the delegates Ulysses sent,
 To bear the presents from the royal tent.
 The sons of Nestor, Phyleus' valiant heir, 245
 Thias and Merion, thunderbolts of war,
 With Lycomedes of Creiontian strain,
 And Melanippus, form'd the chosen train.
 Swift as the word was giv'n, the youths obey'd;
 Twice ten bright vases in the midst they laid; 250

ψ. 237. ——— *None shall dare
 Expect a second summons to the war.*]

This is very artful; Ulysses, to prevail upon Achilles to let the troops take repast, and yet in some sort to second his impatience, gives with the same breath orders for battel, by commanding the troops to march, and expect no farther orders. Thus though the troops go to take repast, it looks as if they do not lose a moment's time, but are going to put themselves in array of battel.
 Dacier.

A row of six fair tripods then succeeds;
 And twice the number of high-bounding steeds;
 Sev'n captives next a lovely line compose;
 The eighth Briseis, like the blooming rose,
 Clos'd the bright band: great Ithacus, before, 255
 First of the train, the golden talents bore;
 The rest in public view the chiefs dispose,
 A splendid scene! then Agamemnon rose:
 The boar Talthybius held: the Grecian lord
 Drew the broad cutlace sheath'd beside his sword: 160
 The stubborn bristles from the victim's brow
 He crops, and off'ring meditates his vow.
 His hands uplifted to th' attesting skies,
 On heav'n's broad marble roof were fix'd his eyes,
 The solemn words, a deep attention draw, 265
 And Greece around fate thrill'd with sacred awe.

Witness thou first! thou greatest pow'r above!
 All-good, all-wise, and all-surveying Jove!
 And mother-earth, and heav'n's revolving light,
 And ye, fell furies of the realms of night, 270
 Who rule the dead, and horrid woes prepare
 For perjur'd kings, and all who falsely swear!
 The black-ey'd maid inviolate removes,
 Pure and unconscious of my manly loves.
 If this be false, heav'n all its vengeance shed, 275
 And levell'd thunder strike my guilty head!

With that, his weapon deep inflicts the wound;
 The bleeding savage tumbles to the ground,

The sacred herald rolls the victim slain
(A feast for fish) into the foaming main. 280

Then thus Achilles. Hear, ye Greeks! and know
Whate'er we feel, 'tis Jove inflicts the woe :
Not else Atrides could our rage inflame,
Nor from my arms, unwilling, force the dame.
'Twas Jove's high will alone, o'er-ruling all, 285
That doom'd our strife, and doom'd the Greeks to fall:
Go then, ye chiefs! indulge the genial rite ;
Achilles waits ye, and expects the fight.

The speedy council at his word adjourn'd :
To their black vessels all the Greeks return'd. 290
Achilles sought his tent. His train before
March'd onward, bending with the gifts they bore.
Those in the tents the squires industrious spread :
The foaming courfers to the stalls they led.
To their new seats the female captives move ; 295
Briseis, radiant as the queen of love,
Slow as she pass'd, beheld with sad survey
Where gash'd with cruel wounds, Patroclus lay.

ψ. 280. *Rolls the victim into the main.*] For it was not lawful to eat the flesh of the victims sacrificed in confirmation of oaths; such were victims of malediction. Eustathius.

ψ. 281. *Hear, ye Greeks, etc.*] Achilles, to let them see that he is intirely appeased, justifies Agamemnon himself, and enters into the reasons with which that prince had coloured his fault. But in that justification he perfectly well preserves his character, and illustrates the advantage he has over that king who offended him. Dacier.

Prone on the body fell the heav'nly fair,
 Beat her sad breast, and tore her golden hair; 300
 All beautiful-in grief, her humid eyes
 Shining with tears, she lifts, and thus she cries.

Ah youth for ever dear, for ever kind,
 Once tender friend of my distracted mind!
 I left thee fresh in life, in beauty gay; 305
 Now find thee cold, inanimated clay!
 What woes my wretched race of life attend?
 Sorrows on sorrows, never doom'd to end!
 The first lov'd consort of my virgin bed
 Before these eyes in fatal battel bled: 310
 My three brave brothers in one mournful day
 All trod the dark, irremeable way:
 Thy friendly hand uprear'd me from the plain,
 And dry'd my sorrows for a husband slain;
 Achilles' care you promis'd I should prove, 315
 The first, the dearest partner of his love,

ψ. 303. *etc.* *The lamentation of Briseis over Patroclus.*] This speech (says Dionysius of Halicarnassus) is not without its artifice: while Briseis seems only to be deploring Patroclus, she represents to Achilles who stands by, the breach of the promises he had made her, and upbraids him with the neglect he had been guilty of in resigning her up to Agamemnon. He adds, that Achilles hereupon acknowledges the justice of her complaint, and makes answer that his promises should be performed: it was a slip in that great critic's memory, for the verse he cites is not in this part of the author, [περί ἰσχυματισμένων, Part 2.]

ψ. 315. *Achilles' care you promis'd, etc.*] In these days when our manners are so different from those of

That rites divine should ratify the band,
 And make me empress in his native land.
 Accept these grateful tears ! for thee they flow,
 For thee, that ever felt another's woe ! 320

Her sister captives echo'd groan for groan,
 Nor mourn'd Patroclus' fortunes, but their own.
 The leaders press'd the chief on every side;
 Unmov'd, he heard them, and with sighs deny'd.

If yet Achilles have a friend, whose care 325
 Is bent to please him, this request forbear:
 Till yonder sun descend, ah let me pay
 To grief and anguish one abstemious day.

the ancients, and we see none of those dismal catastrophes which laid whole kingdoms waste, and subjected princesses and queens to the power of the conqueror; it will perhaps seem astonishing, that a princess of Briseis's birth, the very day that her father, brothers, and husband were killed by Achilles, should suffer herself to be comforted, and even flattered with the hopes of becoming the spouse of the murderer. But such were the manners of those times, as ancient history testifies: and a poet represents them as they were; but if there was a necessity for justifying them, it might be said that slavery was at that time so terrible, that in truth a princess like Briseis was pardonable, to chuse rather to become Achilles's wife than his slave. Dacier.

ψ. 322. *Nor mourn'd Patroclus' fortunes, but their own.*] Homer adds this touch to heighten the character of Briseis, and to shew the difference there was between her and the other captives. Briseis, as a well-born princess, really bewailed Patroclus out of gratitude; but the others, by pretending to bewail him, wept only out of interest. Dacier.

He spoke, and from the warriors turn'd his face:
 Yet still the brother-kings of Atreus' race, 330
 Nestor, Idomeneus, Ulysses sage,
 And Phoenix, strive to calm his grief and rage:
 His rage they calm not, nor his grief controul;
 He groans, he raves, he sorrows from his soul.

Thou too, Patroclus! (thus his heart he vents) 335
 Once spread th' inviting banquet in our tents:
 Thy sweet society, thy winning care,
 Once stay'd Achilles, rushing to the war.
 But now alas! to death's cold arms resign'd,
 What banquet but revenge can glad my mind? 340
 What greater sorrow could afflict my breast,
 What more, if hoary Peleus were deceas'd?
 Who now, perhaps, in Phthia dreads to hear
 His son's sad fate, and drops a tender tear.
 What more, should Neoptolemus the brave 345
 (My only offspring) sink into the grave?
 If yet that offspring lives, (I distant far,
 Of all neglectful, wage a hateful war)
 I cou'd not this, this cruel stroke attend;
 Fate claim'd Achilles, but might spare his friend. 350

ψ. 335. *Thou too, Patroclus! etc.*] This lamentation is finely introduced: while the generals are persuading him to take some refreshment, it naturally awakens in his mind the remembrance of Patroclus, who had so often brought him food every morning before they went to battel: this is very natural, and admirably well conceals the art of drawing the subject of his discourse from the things that present themselves. Spondanus.

I hop'd

I hop'd Patroclus might survive, to rear
 My tender orphan with a parent's care,
 From Scyros isle conduct him o'er the main,
 And glad his eyes with his paternal reign,
 The lofty palace, and the large domain. } 355

For Peleus breathes no more the vital air;
 Or drags a wretched life of age and care,
 But till the news of my sad fate invades
 His hastening soul, and sinks him to the shades.

Sighing he said: his grief the heroes join'd, 360
 Each stole a tear for what he left behind.
 Their mingled grief the fire of heav'n survey'd,
 And thus, with pity, to his blue-ey'd maid.

Is then Achilles now no more thy care,
 And dost thou thus desert the great in war? 365
 Lo, where yon' sails their canvas wings extend,
 All comfortless he sits, and wails his friend:
 Ere thirst and want his forces have oppress'd,
 Haste and infuse ambrosia in his breast.

He spoke, and sudden as the word of Jove, 370
 Shot the descending goddess from above.

Y. 351. *I hop'd Patroclus might survive, etc.*] Patroclus was young, and Achilles who had but a short time to live, hoped that after his death his dear friend would be as a father to his son, and put him into the possession of his kingdom: Neoptolemus would in Patroclus find Peleus, and Achilles; whereas when Patroclus was dead, he must be an orphan indeed. Homer is particularly admirable for the sentiments, and always follows nature. Dacier.

So swift thro' æther the shrill Harpye springs,
 The wide air floating to her ample wings,
 To great Achilles she her flight addrest,
 And pour'd divine ambrosia in his breast, 375
 With nectar sweet, (refection of the Gods!)
 Then, swift ascending, sought the bright abodes.

Now issued from the ships the warrior train,
 And like a deluge pour'd upon the plain.
 As when the piercing blasts of Boreas blow, 380
 And scatter o'er the fields the driving snow;
 From dusky clouds the fleecy winter flies,
 Whose dazling lustre whitens all the skies:
 So helms succeeding helms, so shields from shields
 Catch the quick beams, and brighten all the fields; 385
 Broad glitt'ring breast-plates, spears with pointed rays
 Mix in one stream, reflecting blaze on blaze:
 Thick beats the center as the coursers bound,
 With splendour flame the skies, and laugh the fields around.

ψ. 384. *So helms succeeding helms, so shields from shields
 Catch the quick beams, and brighten all the
 fields.]*

It is probable the reader may think the words, *shining*, *splendid*, and others derived from the lustre of arms, too frequent in these books. My author is to answer for it; but it may be alleged in his excuse, that when it was the custom for every soldier to serve in armour, and when those arms were of brass before the use of iron became common, these images of lustre were less avoidable, and more necessarily frequent in descriptions of this nature.

Full in the midst, high tow'ring o'er the rest, 390
 His limbs in arms divine Achilles drest;
 Arms which the father of the fire bestow'd,
 Forg'd on th' eternal anvils of the God.
 Grief and revenge his furious heart inspire,
 His glowing eye-balls roll with living fire; 395
 He grinds his teeth, and furious with delay
 O'erlooks th' embattled host, and hopes the bloody day.

The silver cuishes first his thigh infold:
 Then o'er his breast was brac'd the hollow gold:
 The brazen sword a various baldric ty'd, 400
 That, starr'd with gems, hung glitt'ring at his side;
 And like the moon, the broad refulgent shield
 Blaz'd with long rays, and gleam'd athwart the field.

So to night wand'ring sailors, pale with fears,
 Wide o'er the wat'ry waste, a light appears, 405
 Which on the far-seen mountain blazing high,
 Streams from some lonely watch-tow'r to the sky:
 With mournful eyes they gaze, and gaze again;
 Loud howls the storm, and drives them o'er the main.

ψ. 390. *Achilles arming himself, etc.*] There is a wonderful pomp in this description of Achilles's arming himself; every reader without being pointed to it, will see the extreme grandeur of all these images; but what is particular, is, in what a noble scale they rise one above another, and how the hero is set still in a stronger point of light than before; till he is at last in a manner covered over with glories: he is at first likened to the moon-light, then to the flames of a beacon, then to a comet, and lastly to the sun itself.

Next, his high head the helmet grac'd; behind 410
 The sweepy crest hung floating in the wind:
 Like the red star, that from his flaming hair
 Shakes down diseases, pestilence and war;
 So stream'd the golden honours from his head,
 Trembled the sparkling plumes, and the loose glories shed.

The chief beholds himself with wond'ring eyes; 416
 His arms he poises, and his motions tries;
 Buoy'd by some inward force, he seems to swim,
 And feels a pinion lifting ev'ry limb.

And now he shakes his great paternal spear, 420
 Pond'rous and huge! which not a Greek could rear.
 From Pelion's cloudy top an ash entire
 Old Chiron fell'd, and shap'd it for his fire;
 A spear which stern Achilles only wields,
 The death of heroes, and the dread of fields: 425

Automedon and Alcimus prepare
 Th' immortal courfers, and the radiant car,
 (The silver traces sweeping at their side)
 Their fiery mouths resplendent bridles ty'd,
 The iv'ry-studded reins, return'd behind, 430
 Wav'd o'er their backs, and to the chariot join'd.
 The charioteer then whirl'd the lash around,
 And swift ascended at one active bound.
 All bright in heav'nly arms, above his squire
 Achilles mounts, and sets the field on fire; 435
 Not brighter Phœbus in th' ethereal way,
 Flames from his chariot, and restores the day.

High o'er the host, all terrible he stands,
And thunders to his steeds these dread commands.

Xanthus and Balius! of Podarges' strain; 440
(Unless ye boast that heav'nly race in vain)

Be swift, be mindful of the load ye bear,
And learn to make your master more your care:
Thro' falling squadrons bear my slaught'ring sword,
Nor, as ye left Patroclus, leave your lord. 445

The gen'rous Xanthus, as the words he said,
Seem'd sensible of woe, and droop'd his head,
Trembling he stood before the golden wain,
And bow'd to dust the honours of his mane,
When, strange to tell! (so Juno will'd) he broke 450
Eternal silence, and portentous spoke.

ψ. 450. *When strange to tell! (so Juno will'd) he broke
Eternal silence, and portentous spoke.]*

It is remarked, in excuse of this extravagant fiction of a horse speaking, that Homer was authorized herein by fable, tradition, and history. Livy makes mention of two oxen that spoke on different occasions, and recites the speech of one, which was, *Roma cave tibi*. Pliny tells us, these animals were particularly gifted this way, l. 8. c. 45. *Est frequens in prodigiis priscorum, bovem locutum*. Besides Homer had prepared us for expecting something miraculous from these horses of Achilles, by representing them to be immortal. We have seen them already sensible, and weeping at the death of Patroclus: and we must add to all this, that a goddess is concerned in working this wonder: it is Juno that does it. Opi-
pian alludes to this in a beautiful passage of his first book: not having the original by me, I shall quote (what I believe is no less beautiful) Mr. Fenton's translation of it.

Achilles! yes! this day at least we bear
 Thy rage in safety thro' the files of war:
 But come it will, the fatal time must come,
 Nor ours the fault, but God decrees thy doom. 455
 Not thro' our crime, or slowness in the course,
 Fell thy Patroclus, but by heav'nly force;
 The bright far-shooting God who gilds the day,
 (Confest we saw him) tore his arms away.
 No—could our swiftness o'er the winds prevail, 460
 Or beat the pinions of the western gale,

*Of all the prone creation, none display
 A friendlier sense of man's superior sway:
 Some in the silent pomp of grief complain,
 For the brave chief, by doom of battel slain:
 And when young Peleus in his rapid car
 Rush'd on, to rouse the thunder of the war,
 With human voice inspir'd, his steed deplor'd
 The fate impending dreadful o'er his Lord.*

Cyneg. lib. i.

Spondanus and Dacier fail not to bring up Balaam's
 ass on this occasion. But methinks the commentators
 are at too much pains to discharge the poet from the
 imputation of extravagant fiction, by accounting for
 wonders of this kind: I am afraid, that next to the ex-
 travagance of inventing them, is that of endeavouring
 to reconcile such fictions to probability. Would not
 one general answer do better, to say once for all, that
 the above-cited authors lived in the *age of wonders*: The
 taste of the world has been generally turned to the
 miraculous; wonders were what the people would have,
 and what not only the poets, but the priests, gave them.

All were in vain—the fates thy death demand,
Due to a mortal and immortal hand.

Then ceas'd for ever, by the Furies ty'd,
His fate-ful voice. Th' intrepid chief reply'd 465
With unabated rage——So let it be!

Portents and prodigies are lost on me.

I know my fates: to die, to see no more

My much-lov'd parents, and my native shore——

Enough—when heav'n ordains, I sink in night; 470

Now perish Troy! he said, and rush'd to fight.

Y. 464. *Then ceas'd for ever, by the furies ty'd,
His fate-ful voice——*

The poet had offended against probability if he had made Juno take away the voice; for Juno (which signifies the air) is the cause of the voice. Besides, the poet was willing to intimate that the privation of the voice is a thing so dismal and melancholy, that none but the Furies can take upon them so cruel an employment. Eustathius.

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the sum of £1000
being the balance of the
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Colonial Office
for the year 1851

T H E
I L I A D.
B O O K XX.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The battel of the Gods, and the acts of Achilles.

JUPITER upon Achilles's return to the battel, calls a council of the Gods, and permits them to assist either party. The terrors of the combate described, when the deities are engaged. Apollo encourages Æneas to meet Achilles. After a long conversation, these two heroes encounter; but Æneas is preserved by the assistance of Neptune. Achilles falls upon the rest of the Trojans, and is upon the point of killing Hector, but Apollo conveys him away in a cloud. Achilles pursues the Trojans with a great slaughter.

The same day continues. The scene is in the field before Troy.

THUS round Pelides breathing war and blood,
Greece sheath'd in arms, beside her vessels stood;
While near impending from a neighb'ring height,
Troy's black battalions wait the shock of fight.
Then Jove to Themis gives command, to call
The Gods to council in the starry hall:

ψ. 5. *Then Jove to Themis gives command, etc.] The poet is now to bring his hero again into action, and he*

Swift o'er Olympus' hundred hills she flies,
And summons all the senate of the skies.

These shining on, in long procession come
To Jove's eternal adamantine dome.

10

Not one was absent, not a rural pow'r,
That haunts the verdant gloom, or rosy bow'r,
Each fair-hair'd dryad of the shady wood,
Each azure sister of the silver flood;
All but old Ocean, hoary fire! who keeps
His ancient seat beneath the sacred deeps.

15

other reason he draws from the allegory of Oceanus, introduces him with the utmost pomp and grandeur: the gods are assembled only upon this account, and Jupiter permits several deities to join with the Trojans, and hinder Achilles from over-ruling destiny itself.

The circumstance of sending Themis to assemble the gods is very beautiful; she is the goddess of justice; the Trojans by the rape of Helen, and by repeated perjuries having broken her laws, she is the properest messenger to summon a synod to bring them to punishment. Eustathius.

Proclus has given a farther explanation of this. Themis or Justice (says he) is made to assemble the gods round Jupiter, because it is from him that all the powers of nature take their virtue, and receive their orders; and Jupiter sends them to the relief of both parties, to shew that nothing falls out but by his permission, and that neither angels, nor men, nor the elements, act but according to the power which is given them.

ψ. 15. *All but old Ocean.*] Eustathius gives two reasons why Oceanus was absent from this assembly: the one is because he is fabled to be the original of all the gods, and it would have been a piece of indecency for him to see the deities, who were all his descendants, war upon one another by joining adverse parties: the other

On marble thrones with lucid columns crown'd,
 (The work of Vulcan) fate the pow'rs around.
 Ev'n * he whose trident sways the wat'ry reign,
 Heard the loud summons, and forsook the main, 20
 Assum'd his throne amid the bright abodes,
 And question'd thus the fire of men and Gods.

What moves the God who heav'n and earth commands,
 And grasps the thunder in his awful hands,
 Thus to convene the whole æthereal state? 25
 Is Greece and Troy the subject in debate?
 Already met, the low'ring hosts appear,
 And death stands ardent on the edge of war.

'Tis true (the cloud-compelling Pow'r replies)
 This day, we call the council of the skies 30
 In care of human race; ev'n Jove's own eye
 Sees with regret unhappy mortals die.
 Far on Olympus' top in secret state
 Ourself will sit, and see the hand of fate
 Work out our will. Celestial pow'rs! descend, 35
 And as your minds direct, your succour lend

* Neptune.

which signifies the element of water, and consequently the whole element could not ascend into the Æther; but whereas Neptune, the rivers, and the fountains are said to have been present, this is no way impossible, if we consider it in an allegorical sense, which implies, that the rivers, seas, and fountains supply the air with vapours, and by that means ascend into the Æther.

ψ. 35. — *Celestial pow'rs! descend,
 And as your minds direct, your succour lend
 To either host———]*

Eustathius informs us, that the ancients were very much

To either host. Troy soon must lie o'erthrown,
If uncontroll'd Achilles fights alone:

Their troops but lately durst not meet his eyes;

What can they now, if in his rage he rise?

40

Assist them, Gods! or Ilion's sacred wall

May fall this day, tho' fate forbids the fall.

divided upon this passage of Homer. Some have criticized it, and others have answered their criticism; but he reports nothing more than the objection, without transmitting the answer to us. Those who condemned Homer, said Jupiter was for the Trojans; he saw the Greeks were the strongest, so permitted the gods to declare themselves, and go to the battel. But therein that God is deceived, and does not gain his point; for the gods who favour the Greeks being stronger than those who favour the Trojans, the Greeks will still have the same advantage. I do not know what answer the partisans of Homer made, but for my part, I think this objection is more ingenious than solid. Jupiter does not pretend that the Trojans should be stronger than the Greeks, he has only a mind that the decree of Destiny should be executed. Destiny had refused to Achilles the glory of taking Troy, but if Achilles fights singly against the Trojans, he is capable of forcing Destiny; (as Homer has already elsewhere said, that there had been brave men who had done so.) Whereas if the gods took part, though those who followed the Grecians were stronger than those who were for the Trojans, the latter would however be strong enough to support destiny, and to hinder Achilles from making himself master of Troy: this was Jupiter's sole view. Thus is this passage far from being blameable, it is on the contrary very beautiful, and infinitely glorious for Achilles. Dacier.

ψ. 41. — *Or Ilion's sacred wall*

May fall this day, tho' fate forbids the fall.]

Monf. de la Motte criticizes on this passage, as thinking

He said, and fir'd their heav'nly breasts with rage:
 On adverse parts the warring Gods engage.
 Heav'n's awful queen; and he whose azure round 45
 Girds the vast globe; the maid in arms renown'd;

it absurd and contradictory to Homer's own system, to imagine, that what fate had ordained should not come to pass. Jupiter here seems to fear that Troy will be taken this very day in spite of destiny, *ὑπὲρ μῶρον*. M. Boivin answers, that the explication hereof depends wholly upon the principles of the ancient Pagan theology, and their doctrine concerning fate. It is certain, according to Homer and Virgil, that what destiny had decreed did not constantly happen in the precise time marked by destiny; the fatal moment was not to be retarded, but might be hastened: for example, that of the death of Dido was advanced by the blow she gave herself; her hour was not then come.

—————*Nec fato, merita nec morte peribat,*
Sed misera ante diem—————

Every violent death was accounted *ὑπὲρ μῶρον*, that is, before the fated time, or (which is the same thing) against the natural order, *turbato mortalitatis ordine*, as the Romans expressed it. And the same might be said of any misfortunes which men drew upon themselves by their own ill conduct. (See the note on ψ. 560. lib. 16.) In a word, it must be allowed that it was not easy, in the Pagan religion, to form the justest ideas upon a doctrine so difficult to be cleared; and upon which it is no great wonder if a poet should not always be perfectly consistent with himself, when it has puzzled such a number of divines and philosophers.

ψ. 44. *On adverse parts the warring Gods engage.*
Heav'n's awful queen, etc.]

Eustathius has a very curious remark upon this division of the gods in Homer, which M. Dacier has en-

Hermes, of profitable arts the fire,
 And Vulcan, the black sov'reign of the fire:
 These to the fleet repair with instant flight;
 The vessels tremble as the Gods alight.
 In aid of Troy, Latona, Phœbus came,
 Mars fiery-helm'd, the laughter-loving dame,

50

tirely borrowed (as indeed no commentator ever borrowed more, or acknowledged less, than she has every where done from Eustathius.) This division, says he, is not made at random, but founded upon very solid reasons, drawn from the nature of those two nations. He places on the side of the Greeks all the gods who preside over arts and sciences, to signify how much in that respect the Greeks excelled all other nations. Juno, Pallas, Neptune, Mercury and Vulcan are for the Greeks; Juno, not only as the goddess who presides over marriage, and who is concerned to revenge an injury done to the nuptial bed, but likewise as the goddess who represents monarchial government, which was better established in Greece than any where else; Pallas, because being the goddess of war and wisdom, she ought to assist those who are wronged; besides the Greeks understood the art of war better than the Barbarians; Neptune, because he was an enemy to the Trojans upon account of Laomedon's perfidiousness, and because most of the Greeks being come from islands or peninsulas, they were in some sort his subjects; Mercury, because he is a God who presides over stratagems of war, and because Troy was taken by that of the wooden horse; and lastly Vulcan, as the declared enemy of Mars and of all adulterers, and as the father of arts.

ψ. 52. *Mars, fiery-helm'd, the laughter-loving dame.*] The reasons why Mars and Venus engage for the Trojans, are very obvious; the point in hand was to favour ravishers and debauchees. But the same reason, you

Xanthus whose streams in golden currents flow,
 And the chaste huntress of the silver bow.
 Ere yet the Gods their various aid employ, 55
 Each Argive bosom swell'd with manly joy,
 While great Achilles, (terror of the plain)
 Long lost to battel, shone in arms again.
 Dreadful he stood in front of all his host;
 Pale Troy beheld, and seem'd already lost; 60
 Her bravest heroes pant with inward fear,
 And trembling see another God of war.

But when the pow'rs descending swell'd the fight,
 Then tumult rose; fierce rage and pale affright
 Vary'd each face; then Discord sounds alarms, 65
 Earth echoes, and the nations rush to arms.
 Now thro' the trembling shores Minerva calls,
 And now she thunders from the Grecian walls.
 Mars hov'ring o'er his Troy, his terror shrouds
 In gloomy tempests, and a night of clouds: 70
 Now thro' each Trojan heart he fury pours
 With voice divine from Ilion's topmost tow'rs,
 Now shouts to Simois, from her beauteous hill;
 The mountain shook, the rapid stream stood still.

will say, does not serve for Apollo, Diana and Latona. It is urged that Apollo is for the Trojans, because of the darts and arrows which were the principal strength of the Barbarians; and Diana, because she presided over dancing, and those Barbarians were great dancers: and Latona, as influenced by her children. Xanthus being a Trojan river, is interested for his country. Eustathius.

Above, the fire of Gods his thunder rolls, 75
 And peals on peals redoubled rend the poles.
 Beneath, stern Neptune shakes the solid ground;
 The forests wave, the mountains nod around;
 Thro' all their summits tremble Ida's woods,
 And from their sources boil her hundred floods. 80

ψ. 75. *Above, the fire of Gods, etc.*] “ The images
 “ (says Longinus) which Homer gives of the combat
 “ of the gods, have in them something prodigiously great
 “ and magnificent. We see in these verses, the earth
 “ opened to its very center, hell ready to disclose itself,
 “ the whole machine of the world upon the point to be
 “ destroyed and overturned: to shew that in such a
 “ conflict, heaven and hell, all things mortal and im-
 “ mortal, the whole creation in short was engaged in
 “ this battel, and all the extent of nature in danger.”

*Non secus ac si qua penitus vi terra dehiscens
 Infernas referet sedes et regna recludat
 Pallida, Diis inuisa, superque immane barathrum
 Cernatur, trepidantque immisso lumine manes.* ”

Virgil.

Madam Dacier rightly observes that this copy is inferior to the original on this account, that Virgil has made a comparison of that which Homer made an action. This occasions an infinite difference, which is easy to be perceived.

One may compare with this noble passage of Homer, the battel of the gods and giants in Hesiod's Theogony, which is one of the sublimest parts of that author; and Milton's battel of the Angels in the sixth book: the elevation, and enthusiasm of our great countryman seems owing to this original.

Troy's turrets totter on the rocking plain ;
 And the tofs'd navies beat the heaving main.
 Deep in the dismal regions of the dead,
 Th' infernal monarch rear'd his horrid head,
 Leap'd from his throne, lest Neptune's arm should lay 85
 His dark dominions open to the day,
 And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,
 Abhorr'd by men, and dreadful ev'n to Gods.

Such war th' immortals wage : such horrors rend
 The world's vast concave, when the Gods contend. 90
 First silver-shafted Phœbus took the plain
 Against blue Neptune, monarch of the main :
 The God of arms his giant bulk display'd,
 Oppos'd to Pallas, war's triumphant maid.
 Against Latona march'd the son of May ; 95
 The quiver'd Dian, sister of the day,
 (Her golden arrows sounding at her side)
 Saturnia, majesty of heav'n, defy'd.

ψ. 91. *First silver-shafted Phœbus took the plain, etc.*]
 With what art does the poet engage the gods in this
 conflict ! Neptune opposes Apollo, which implies that
 things moist and dry are in continual discord : Pallas
 fights with Mars, which signifies that rashness and wis-
 dom always disagree : Juno is against Diana, that is,
 nothing more differs from a marriage state, than celibacy :
 Vulcan engages Xanthus, that is, fire and water are in
 perpetual variance. Thus we have a fine allegory con-
 cealed under the veil of excellent poetry, and the reader
 receives a double satisfaction at the same time from
 beautiful verses, and an instructive moral. Eustathius.

With fiery Vulcan last in battel stands
 The sacred flood that rolls on golden sands; 100
 Xanthus his name with those of heav'nly birth,
 But call'd Scamander by the sons of earth.

While thus the Gods in various league engage,
 Achilles glow'd with more than mortal rage:
 Hector he sought; in search of Hector turn'd 105
 His eyes around, for Hector only burn'd;
 And burst like light'ning thro' the ranks, and vow'd
 'To glut the God of battels with his blood.

Æneas was the first who dar'd to stay;
 Apollo wedg'd him in the warrior's way, 110
 But swell'd his bosom with undaunted might,
 Half-forc'd, and half-persuaded to the fight.
 Like young Lycaon, of the royal line,
 In voice and aspect seem'd the power divine;
 And bade the chief reflect, how late with scorn 115
 In distant threats he brav'd the Goddess-born.

Then thus the hero of Anchises' strain.
 To meet Pelides you persuade in vain:
 Already have I met, nor void of fear
 Observ'd the fury of his flying spear; 120

ψ. 119. *Already have I met, etc.*] Eustathius remarks that the poet lets no opportunity pass of inserting into his poem the actions that preceded the tenth year of the war, especially the actions of Achilles the hero of it. In this place he brings in Æneas extolling the bravery of his enemy, and confessing himself to have formerly been vanquished by him: at the same time he preserves a piece of ancient history, by inserting into the poem the hero's conquest of Pedasus and Lyrnessus.

From Ida's woods he chas'd us to the field,
 Our force he scatter'd, and our herds he kill'd:
 Lyrnessus, Pedasus in ashes lay;
 But (Jove assisting) I surviv'd the day.
 Else had I sunk oppress'd in fatal fight, 125
 By fierce Achilles and Minerva's might.
 Where'er he mov'd the goddess shone before,
 And bath'd his brazen lance in hostile gore.
 What mortal man Achilles can sustain?
 Th' immortals guard him thro' the dreadful plain, 130
 And suffer not his dart to fall in vain.
 Were God my aid, this arm should check his pow'r,
 Tho' strong in battel as a brazen tow'r.

To whom the son of Jove. That God implore,
 And be, what great Achilles was before. 135
 From heav'nly Venus thou deriv'st thy strain,
 And he, but from a sister of the main;
 An aged sea God, father of his line,
 But Jove himself the sacred source of thine.

Y. 121. *From Ida's woods he chas'd us——
 But Jove assisting I surviv'd.]*

It is remarkable that Æneas owed his safety to his flight from Achilles, but it may seem strange that Achilles, who was so famed for his swiftness should not be able to overtake him, even with Minerva for his guide. Eustathius answers, that this might proceed from the better knowledge Æneas might have of the ways and defiles: Achilles being a stranger, and Æneas having long kept his father's flocks in those parts.

He farther observes, that the word *παῖς* discovers that it was in the night that Achilles pursued Æneas.

Then lift thy weapon for a noble blow, 140
Nor fear the vaunting of a mortal foe.

This said, and spirit breath'd into his breast,
Thro' the thick troops th' embolden'd hero prest:
His vent'rous act the white-arm'd queen survey'd,
And thus, assembling all the pow'rs, she said. 145

Behold an action, Gods! that claims your care,
Lo great Æneas rushing to the war;
Against Pelides he directs his course,
Phœbus impels, and Phœbus gives him force.
Restrain his bold career; at least, t'attend 150
Our favour'd hero, let some pow'r descend.
To guard his life, and add to his renown,
We, the great armament of heav'n, came down.
Hereafter let him fall, as fates design,
That spun so short his life's illustrious line: 155
But lest some adverse God now cross his way,
Give him to know, what pow'rs assist this day:
For how shall mortal stand the dire alarms,
When heav'n's refulgent host appear in arms?

Thus she, and thus the God whose force can make 160
The solid globe's eternal basis shake.
Against the might of man, so feeble known,
Why should celestial pow'rs exert their own?
Suffice, from yonder mount to view the scene;
And leave to war the fates of mortal men. 165
But if th' armipotent, or God of light,
Obstruct Achilles, or commence the fight,

Thence on the Gods of Troy we swift descend:
 Full soon, I doubt not, shall the conflict end,
 And these, in ruin and confusion hurl'd, 170
 Yield to our conqu'ring arms the lower world.

Thus having said, the tyrant of the sea,
 Cærulean Neptune, rose, and led the way.
 Advanc'd upon the field there stood a mound
 Of earth congested, wall'd, and trench'd around; 175
 In elder times to guard Alcides made,
 (The work of Trojans, with Minerva's aid)
 What time, a vengeful monster of the main
 Swept the wide shore, and drove him to the plain.

✓. 174. *Advanc'd upon the field there stood a mound,*
 etc.] It may not be unnecessary to explain this passage
 to make it understood by the reader: the poet is very
 short in the description, as supposing the fact already
 known, and hastens to the combat between Achilles
 and Æneas. This is very judicious in Homer, not to
 dwell on a piece of history that had no relation to his
 action, when he has raised the reader's expectation by
 so pompous an introduction, and made the Gods them-
 selves his spectators.

The story is as follows: Laomedon having defrauded
 Neptune of the reward he promised him for the building
 the walls of Troy, Neptune sent a monstrous whale, to
 which Laomedon exposed his daughter Hesiene: but
 Hercules having undertaken to destroy the monster, the
 Trojans raised an intrenchment to defend Hercules from
 his pursuit: this being a remarkable piece of conduct
 in the Trojans, it gave occasion to the poet to adorn a
 plain narration with fiction, by ascribing the work to
 Pallas the goddess of wisdom. Eustathius.

Here Neptune, and the Gods of Greece repair, 180
With clouds encompass'd, and a veil of air :

The adverse pow'rs, around Apollo laid,
Crown the fair hills that silver Simois shade.

In circle close each heav'nly party fate,
Intent to form the future scheme of fate ; 185
But mix not yet in fight, tho' Jove on high
Gives the loud signal, and the heav'ns reply.

Meanwhile the rushing armies hide the ground ;
The trampled centre yields a hollow sound :
Steeds cas'd in mail, and chiefs in armour bright, 190
The gleamy champain glows with brazen light.
Amid both hosts (a dreadful space) appear
There, great Achilles ; bold Æneas here.
With tow'ring strides Æneas first advanc'd ;
The nodding plumage on his helmet danc'd, 195

ψ. 180. *Here Neptune and the Gods, etc.*] I wonder why Eustathius and all other commentators should be silent upon this recess of the gods: it seems strange at the first view, that so many deities, after having entered the scene of action, should perform so short a part, and immediately become themselves spectators? I conceive the reason of this conduct in the poet to be, that Achilles has been inactive during the greatest part of the poem; and as he is the hero of it, ought to be the chief character in it: the poet therefore withdraws the gods from the field, that Achilles may have the whole honour of the day, and not act in subordination to the deities: besides the poem now draws to a conclusion, and it is necessary for Homer to enlarge upon the exploits of Achilles, that he may leave a noble idea of his valour upon the mind of the reader.

Spread o'er his breast the fencing shield he bore,
 And, as he mov'd, his jav'lin flam'd before.
 Not so Pelides; furious to engage,
 He rush'd impetuous. Such the lion's rage,
 Who viewing first his foes with scornful eyes, 200
 Tho' all in arms the peopled city rise,
 Stalks careless on, with unregarding pride;
 'Till at the length, by some brave youth defy'd,
 To his bold spear the savage turns alone,
 He murmurs fury with an hollow groan; 205
 He grins, he foams, he rolls his eyes around;
 Lash'd by his tail his heaving sides resound;
 He calls up all his rage; he grinds his teeth,
 Resolv'd on vengeance, or resolv'd on death.
 So fierce Achilles on Æneas flies; 210
 So stands Æneas, and his force defies.
 Ere yet the stern encounter join'd, begun
 The seed of Thetis thus to Venus' son.

Why comes Æneas thro' the ranks so far?
 Seeks he to meet Achilles' arm in war, 215

ψ. 214, etc. *The conversation of Achilles and Æneas.*] I shall lay before the reader the words of Eustathius in defence of this passage, which I confess seems to me to be faulty in the poet. The reader (says he) would naturally expect some great and terrible achievements should ensue from Achilles on his first enterance upon action. The poet seems to prepare us for it, by his magnificent introduction of him into the field: but instead of a storm, we have a calm; he follows the same method in this book as he did in the third, where when both armies were ready to engage in a general conflict,

In hope the realms of Priam to enjoy,
 And prove his merits to the throne of Troy?
 Grant that beneath thy lance Achilles dies,
 The partial monarch may refuse the prize;
 Sons he has many; those thy pride may quell; 220
 And 'tis his fault to love those sons too well.
 Or, in reward of thy victorious hand,
 Has Troy propos'd some spacious tract of land?
 An ample forest, or a fair domain,
 Of hills for vines, and arable for grain? 225
 Ev'n this, perhaps will hardly prove thy lot.
 But can Achilles be so soon forgot?

he ends the day in a single combat between two heroes: thus he always agreeably surprizes his readers. Besides the admirers of Homer reap a farther advantage from this conversation of the heroes: there is a chain of ancient history as well as a series of poetical beauties.

Madam Dacier's excuse is very little better: and to shew that this is really a fault in the poet, I believe I may appeal to the taste of every reader who certainly finds himself disappointed: our expectation is raised to see gods and heroes engage, when suddenly it all sinks into such a combat, in which neither party receives a wound: and (what is more extraordinary) the gods are made the spectators of so small an action! what occasion was there for thunder, earthquakes, and descending deities, to introduce a matter of so little importance? neither is it any excuse to say he has given us a piece of ancient history; we expected to read a poet, not an historian. In short, after the greatest preparation for action imaginable, he suspends the whole narration, and from the heat of a poet, cools at once into the simplicity of an historian.

Once (as I think) you saw this brandish'd spear,
 And then the great Æneas seem'd to fear.
 With hearty haste from Ida's mount he fled, 230
 Nor, 'till he reach'd Lyrnessus, turn'd his head.
 Her lofty walls not long our progress stay'd;
 Those, Pallas, Jove, and we, in ruins laid:
 In Grecian chains her captive race were cast;
 'Tis true, the great Æneas fled too fast. 235
 Defrauded of my conquest once before,
 What then I lost, the Gods this day restore.
 Go; while thou may'st, avoid the threaten'd fate;
 Fools stay to feel it, and are wise too late.

To this Anchises' son. Such words employ 240
 To one that fears thee, some unwarlike boy;
 Such we disdain; the best may be defy'd
 With mean reproaches, and unmanly pride:
 Unworthy the high race from which we came,
 Proclaim'd so loudly by the voice of fame; 245
 Each from illustrious fathers draws his line;
 Each goddess-born; half human, half divine.
 Thetis' this day, or Venus' offspring dies,
 And tears shall trickle from celestial eyes:
 For when two heroes, thus deriv'd, contend, 250
 'Tis not in words the glorious strife can end.
 If yet thou farther seek to learn my birth
 (A tale resounded thro' the spacious earth)
 Hear how the glorious origin we prove
 From ancient Dardanus, the first from Jove: 255'

Dardania's walls he rais'd; for Ilion, then,
 (The city since of many-languag'd men)
 Was not. The natives were content to till
 The shady foot of Ida's fount-full hill.

From Dardanus, great Erichthonius springs, 260
 The richest, once, of Asia's wealthy kings;
 Three thousand mares his spacious pastures bred,
 Three thousand foals beside their mothers fed.
 Boreas, enamour'd of the sprightly train,
 Conceal'd his godhead in a flowing mane, 265

ψ. 258. *The natives were content to till
 The shady foot of Ida's fount-ful hill.*

Κτίσσει δὲ Δαρδανίην, ἐπεὶ ἔπω Ἰλῖος ἱρῇ
 Ἐν πεδίῳ πεπóλιτο πόλις μερόπων Ἀνθρώπων
 Ἀλλ' ἐθ' ὑπώρειας ᾤκειον πολυπιδάκνυ' Ἰδης.

Plato and Strabo understand this passage as favouring the opinion that the mountainous parts of the world were first inhabited, after the universal deluge; and that mankind by degrees descended to dwell in the lower parts of the hills (which they would have the word *ὑπώρεια* signify) and only in greater process of time ventured into the valleys: Virgil however seems to have taken this word in a sense something different where he alludes to this passage. *Æn.* 3. 109.

————— *Nondum Ilium et arces
 Pergameæ steterant, habitabant vallibus imis.*

ψ. 262. *Three thousand mares, etc.*] The number of the horses and mares of Erichthonius may seem incredible, were we not assured by Herodotus that there were in the stud of Cyrus at one time (besides those for the service of war) eight hundred horses and six thousand six hundred mares. Eustathius.

ψ. 264. *Boreas enamour'd, etc.*] Homer has the hap-

With voice dissembled to his loves he neigh'd,
 And cours'd the dappled beauties o'er the mead:
 Hence sprung twelve others of unrival'd kind,
 Swift as their mother mares, and father wind.
 These lightly skimming, when they swept the plain, 270
 Nor ply'd the grass, nor bent the tender grain;

pineness of making the least circumstance considerable; the subject grows under his hands, and the plainest matter shines in his dress of poetry: another poet would have said these horses were as swift as the wind, but Homer tells you that they sprung from Boreas the god of the wind; and thence drew their swiftness.

ψ. 270. *These lightly skimming, as they swept the plain.*] The poet illustrates the swiftness of these horses by describing them as running over the standing corn, and surface of waters, without making any impression. Virgil has imitated these lines, and adapts what Homer says of these horses to the swiftness of Camilla. Æn. 7. 809.

*Illa vel intactae segetis per summa volaret
 Gramina; nec teneras cursu laessisset aristas:
 Vel mare per medium, fluctu suspensa tumentis
 Ferret iter, celeres nec tingeret æquore plantas.*

The reader will easily perceive that Virgil's is almost a literal translation: he has imitated the very run of the verses, which flow nimbly away in dactyls, and as swift as the wind they describe.

I cannot but observe one thing in favour of Homer, that there can no greater commendation be given to him, than by considering the conduct of Virgil: who, though undoubtedly the greatest poet after him, seldom ventures to vary much from his original in the passages he takes from him, as in a despair of improving, and contented if he can but equal them.

And when along the level seas they flew,
 Scarce on the surface curl'd the briny dew.
 Such Erichthonius was : from him there came
 The sacred Tros, of whom the Trojan name. 275
 Three sons renown'd adorn'd his nuptial bed,
 Ilus, Assaracus, and Ganymed :
 The matchless Ganymed, divinely fair,
 Whom heav'n enamour'd snatch'd to upper air,
 To bear the cup of Jove (æthereal guest) 280
 The grace and glory of th' ambrosial feast.
 The two remaining sons the line divide :
 First rose Laomedon from Ilus' side ;
 From him Tithonus, now in cares grown old,
 And Priam, (blest with Hector, brave and bold :) 284
 Clytius and Lampus, ever-honour'd pair ;
 And Hicetaon, thunderbolt of war.
 From great Assaracus sprung Capys, He
 Begat Anchises, and Anchises me.

ψ. 280. *To bear the cup of Jove.*] To be a cupbearer has in all ages and nations been reckoned an honourable employment: Sappho mentions it in honour of her brother Labichus, that he was cup-bearer to the nobles of Mitylene: the son of Menelaus executed the same office; Hebe and Mercury served the gods in the same station.

It was the custom in the Pagan worship to employ noble youths to pour the wine upon the sacrifice: in this office Ganymede might probably attend upon the altar of Jupiter, and from thence was fabled to be his cup-bearer. Eustathius.

Such is our race: 'tis fortune gives us birth, 290

But Jove alone endues the soul with worth:

He, source of pow'r and might! with boundless sway,

All human courage gives, or takes away.

Long in the field of words we may contend,

Reproach is infinite, and knows no end, 295

Arm'd or with truth or falsehood, right or wrong,

So voluble a weapon is the tongue;

Wounded, we wound; and neither side can fail,

For every man has equal strength to rail:

Women alone, when in the streets they jar, 300

Perhaps excel us in this wordy war;

Like us they stand, encompass'd with the croud,

And vent their anger impotent and loud.

Cease then—Our business in the field of fight

Is not to question, but to prove our might. 305

To all those insults thou hast offer'd here,

Receive this answer: 'tis my flying spear.

He spoke. With all his force the jav'lin flung,

Fix'd deep, and loudly in the buckler rung.

Far on his out-stretch'd arm, Pelides held 310

(To meet the thund'ring lance) his dreadful shield,

That trembled as it stuck; nor void of fear

Saw, ere it fell, th' immeasurable spear.

His fears were vain; impenetrable charms

Secur'd the temper of th' æthereal arms. 315

Thro' two strong plates the point its passage held,

But stopp'd, and rested, by the third repell'd;

Five plates of various metal, various mold,
 Compos'd the shield, of brass each outward fold,
 Of tin each inward, and the middle gold : } 320
 There stuck the lance. Then rising ere he threw,
 The forceful spear of great Achilles flew,
 And pierc'd the Dardan shield's extremest bound,
 Where the shrill brass return'd a sharper sound :
 Thro' the thin verge the Pelean weapon glides, 325
 And the slight cov'ring of expanded hides.
 Æneas his contracted body bends,
 And o'er him high the riven targe extends,
 Sees thro' its parting plates, the upper air,
 And at his back perceives the quiv'ring spear : 330
 A fate so near him, chills his soul with fright,
 And swims before his eyes the many-colour'd light.
 Achilles, rushing in with dreadful cries,
 Draws his broad blade, and at Æneas flies :
 Æneas rousing as the foe came on, 335
 (With force collected) heaves a mighty stone :
 A mass enormous ! which in modern days
 No two of earth's degen'rate sons could raise.
 But Ocean's God, whose earthquakes rock the ground,
 Saw the distress, and mov'd the pow'rs around. 340

ψ. 339. *But Ocean's God, etc.*] The conduct of the poet in making Æneas owe his safety to Neptune in this place is remarkable : Neptune is an enemy to the Trojans, yet he dares not suffer so pious a man to fall, lest Jupiter should be offended : this shews, says Eustathius, that piety is always under the protection of God ; and that favours are sometimes conferred not out of kindness,

Lo! on the brink of fate Æneas stands,
 An instant victim to Achilles' hands:
 By Phœbus urg'd; but Phœbus has bestow'd
 His aid in vain: the man o'erpow'rs the God.
 And can ye see this righteous chief atone 345
 With guileless blood, for vices not his own?
 To all the Gods his constant vows were paid:
 Sure, tho' he wars for Troy, he claims our aid.
 Fate wills not this; nor thus can Jove resign
 The future father of the Dardan line: 350
 The first great ancestor obtain'd his grace,
 And still his love descends on all the race.
 For Priam now, and Priam's faithless kind,
 At length are odious to th' all-seeing mind;

but to prevent a greater detriment: thus Neptune preserves Æneas, lest Jupiter should revenge his death upon the Grecians.

ψ. 345. *And can ye see this righteous chief, etc.* Though Æneas is represented a man of great courage, yet his piety is his most shining character: this is the reason why he is always the care of the gods, and they favour him constantly through the whole poem with their immediate protection.

It is in this light that Virgil has presented him to the view of the reader: his valour bears but the second place in the Æneis. In the Ilias indeed he is drawn in miniature, and in the Æneis at full length; but there are the same features in the copy, which are in the original, and he is the same Æneas in Rome as he was in Troy.

On great Æneas shall devolve the reign, 355
And sons succeeding sons the lasting line sustain.

ψ. 355. *On great Æneas shall devolve the reign,
And sons succeeding sons the lasting line sustain.*]

The story of Æneas's founding the Roman empire, gave Virgil the finest occasion imaginable of paying a complement to Augustus, and his countrymen, who were fond of being thought the descendants of Troy. He has translated these two lines literally, and put them in the nature of a prophecy; as the favourers of the opinion of Æneas's sailing into Italy, imagine Homer's to be.

-----Αἰνείας ἔνι Τρώεσσι ἀνάξει
καὶ παῖδες παίδων τοῖσιν μετόπισθε γίνονται.

*Hic domus Æneæ cunctis dominabitur oris,
Et nati natorum et qui nascentur ab illis.*

There has been a very ancient alteration made (as Strabo observes) in these two lines, by substituting πάν-
τισσι, in the room of τρώεσσι. It is not improbable but Virgil might give occasion for it, by his *cunctis domina-
bitur oris*.

Eustathius does not intirely discountenance this story: if it be understood, says he, as a prophecy, the poet might take it from the Sibylline oracles. He farther remarks, that the poet artfully interweaves into his poem not only the things which happened before the commencement, and in the prosecution of the Trojan war; but other matters of importance which happened even after that war was brought to a conclusion. Thus for instance, we have here a piece of history not extant in any other author, by which we are informed that the house of Æneas succeeded to the crown of Troas, and to the kingdom of Priam. Eustathius.

This passage is very considerable, for it ruins the famous chimæra of the Roman empire, and of the family

The great earth-shaker thus: to whom replies
Th' imperial Goddess with the radiant eyes.

of the Cæsars, who both pretended to deduce their original from Venus by Æneas, alleging that after the taking of Troy, Æneas came into Italy: and this pretension is hereby actually destroyed. This testimony of Homer ought to be looked upon as an authentic act, the fidelity and verity thereof cannot be questioned. Neptune, as much an enemy as he is to the Trojans, declares that Æneas, and after him his posterity, shall reign over the Trojans. Would Homer have put this prophecy in Neptune's mouth, if he had not known that Æneas did not leave Troy, but that he reigned there, and if he had not seen in his time the descendants of that prince reign there likewise? That poet wrote two hundred and sixty years, or thereabouts, after the taking of Troy; and what is very remarkable, he wrote in some of the towns of Ionia, that is to say, in the neighbourhood of Phrygia, so that the time and place give such a weight to his deposition, that nothing can invalidate it. All that the historians have written concerning Æneas's voyage into Italy, ought to be considered as a romance, made on purpose to destroy all historical truth; for the most ancient is posterior to Homer by some ages. Before Dionysius of Halicarnassus, some writers being sensible of the strength of this passage of Homer, undertook to explain it so as to reconcile it with this fable; and they said that Æneas, after having been in Italy, returned to Troy, and left his son Ascanius there. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, little satisfied with this solution, which did not seem to him to be probable, has taken another method: he would have it, that by these words, "He shall reign over the Trojans," Homer meant, He shall reign over the Trojans whom he shall carry with him into Italy. "For is it not possible, says he, that Æneas should reign over the Trojans, whom he had taken with him, though settled elsewhere?"

Good as he is, to immolate or spare

The Dardan prince, O Neptune, be thy care; 360

Pallas and I, by all that Gods can bind,

Have sworn destruction to the Trojan kind;

Not ev'n an instant to protract their fate,

Or save one member of the sinking state;

Till her last flame be quench'd with her last gore, 365

And ev'n her crumbling ruins are no more,

The king of Ocean to the fight descends,

Thro' all the whistling darts his course he bends,

Swift interpos'd between the warriors flies,

And casts thick darkness o'er Achilles' eyes. 370

That historian, who wrote in Rome itself, and in the very reign of Augustus, was willing to make his court to that prince, by explaining this passage of Homer, so as to favour the chimæra he was possessed with. And this is a reproach that may with some justice be cast on him; for poets may by their fictions flatter princes, and welcome: it is their trade. But for historians to corrupt the gravity and severity of history, to substitute fable in the place of truth, is what ought not to be pardoned. Strabo was much more scrupulous, for though he wrote his books of geography towards the beginning of Tiberius's reign, yet he had the courage to give a right explication to this passage of Homer, and to aver, that this poet said, and meant, that Æneas remained at Troy, that he reigned therein, Priam's whole race being extinguished, and that he left the kingdom to his children after him, lib. 13. You may see this whole matter discussed in a letter from M. Bochart to M. de Sagrais, who has prefixed it to his remarks upon the translation of Virgil.

From great Æneas' shield the spear he drew,
 And at its master's feet the weapon threw.
 That done, with force divine he snatch'd on high
 The Dardan prince, and bore him thro' the sky,
 Smooth gliding without step, above the heads 375
 Of warring heroes, and of bounding steeds.
 Till at the battel's utmost verge they light,
 Where the slow Caucons close the rear of fight:

ψ. 378. *Where the slow Caucons close the rear.*] The Caucones (says Eustathius) were of Paphlagonian extract: and this perhaps was the reason why they are not distinctly mentioned in the catalogue, they being included under the general name of Paphlagonians: though two lines are quoted which are said to have been left out by some transcriber, and immediately followed this,

Κρῶμαν τ' Αἰγιαλόν τε καὶ ὑψηλὸς Ἐρυθίνους.

Which verses are these,

Καύκανας αὖτ' ἤγε πολυχλῆος υἱὸς Ἀμύμων.

Or as others read it, Ἀμειβος.

Οἱ περὶ παρθένιον ποταμὸν κλυτὰ δώματ' ἔναιον.

Or according to others,

Κατὰ δώματ' ἔναιον,

Yet I believe these are not Homer's lines, but rather the addition of some transcriber; and it is evident by consulting the passage from which they are said to have been curtailed, that they would be absurd in that place; for the second line is actually there already; and as these Caucons are said to live upon the banks of the Parthenius, so are the Paphlagonians in the above-mentioned passage. It is therefore more probable that the Caucons are included in the Paphlagonians.

The Godhead there (his heav'nly form confess'd)
 With words like these the panting chief address'd. 380

What pow'r, O prince, with force inferior far
 Urg'd thee to meet Achilles' arm in war!
 Henceforth beware, nor antedate thy doom,
 Defrauding fate of all thy fame to come.
 But when the day decreed (for come it must) 385
 Shall lay this dreadful hero in the dust,
 Let then the furies of that arm be known,
 Secure, no Grecian force transcends thy own.

With that, he left him wond'ring as he lay,
 Then from Achilles chas'd the mist away: 390
 Sudden, returning with the stream of light,
 The scene of war came rushing on his sight.

Then thus, amaz'd: what wonders strike my mind!
 My spear, that parted on the wings of wind,
 Laid here before me! and the Dardan lord 395
 That fell this instant, vanish'd from my sword!
 I thought alone with mortals to contend,
 But pow'rs celestial sure this foe defend.

Great as he is, our arm he scarce will try,
 Content for once, with all his Gods, to fly. 400

Now then let others bleed——This said, aloud
 He vents his fury, and inflames the croud,
 O Greeks (he cries, and ev'ry rank alarms)
 Join battel, man to man, and arms to arms!

'Tis not in me, tho' favour'd by the sky, 405
 To mow whole troops, and make whole armies fly:

No

No God can singly such a host engage,
 Not Mars himself, nor great Minerva's rage.
 But whatsoe'er Achilles can inspire,
 Whate'er of active force, or acting fire, 410
 Whate'er this heart can prompt, or hand obey;
 All, all Achilles, Greeks! is yours to-day.
 Thro' yon' wide host this arm shall scatter fear,
 And thin the squadrons with my single spear.

He said: nor less elate with martial joy, 415
 The god-like Hector warm'd the troops of Troy.
 Trojans, to war! think Hector leads you on;
 Nor dread the vaunts of Peleus' haughty son.
 Deeds must decide our fate. Ev'n those with words
 Insult the brave, who tremble at their swords: 420
 The weakest atheist-wretch all heav'n defies,
 But shrinks and shudders, when the thunder flies.
 Nor from yon' boaster shall your chief retire,
 Not tho' his heart were steel, his hands were fire;
 That fire, that steel, your Hector should withstand, 425
 And brave that vengeful heart, that dreadful hand.

Thus (breathing rage thro' all) the hero said;
 A wood of lances rises round his head,
 Clamours on clamours tempest all the air,
 They join, they throng, they thicken to the war. 430
 But Phœbus warns him from high heav'n to shun
 The single fight with Thêtis' god-like son;
 More safe to combat in the mingled band,
 Nor tempt too near the terrors of his hand.

He hears, obedient to the God of light, 435
 And plung'd within the ranks, awaits the fight.

Then fierce Achilles, shouting to the skies,
 On Troy's whole force with boundless fury flies.
 First falls Iphytion, at his army's head;
 Brave was the chief, and brave the host he led, 440
 From great Otrynteus he deriv'd his blood,
 His mother was a Nais of the flood;
 Beneath the shades of Tmolus, crown'd with snow,
 From Hyde's walls he rul'd the lands below,
 Fierce as he springs, the sword his head divides; 445
 The parted visage falls on equal sides:
 With loud-resounding arms he strikes the plain;
 While thus Achilles glories o'er the slain.

Lie there, Otryntides! the Trojan earth
 Receives thee dead, tho' Gygæ boast thy birth; 450
 Those beauteous fields where Hyllus' waves are roll'd,
 And plenteous Hermus swells with tides of gold,
 Are thine no more——Th' insulting hero said,
 And left him sleeping in eternal shade.

The rolling wheels of Greece the body tore, 455
 And dash'd their axles with no vulgar gore.

Demoleon next, Antenor's offspring, laid
 Breathless in dust, the price of rashness paid.
 Th' impatient steel with full descending sway
 Forc'd thro' his brazen helm its furious way, 460
 Resistless drove the batter'd skull before,
 And dash'd and mingled all the brains with gore.

This sees Hippodamas, and seiz'd with fright,
Deserts his chariot for a swifter flight :

The lance arrests him : an ignoble wound 465

The panting Trojan rivets to the ground.

He groans away his soul : not louder rores

At Neptune's shrine on Helice's high shores

The victim bull ; the rocks rebellow round,

And Ocean listens to the grateful sound. 470

Then fell on Polydore his vengeful rage,

The youngest hope of Priam's stooping age :

ψ. 467.—*Not louder rores*

At Neptune's shrine on Helice's high shores, etc.]

In Helice, a town of Achaia, three quarters of a league from the gulph of Corinth, Neptune had a magnificent temple, where the Ionians offered every year to him a sacrifice of a bull ; and it was with these people an auspicious sign, and a certain mark, that the sacrifice would be accepted, if the bull bellowed as he was led to the altar. After the Ionic migration, which happened about 140 years after the taking of Troy, the Ionians of Asia assembled in the fields of Priene to celebrate the same festival in honour of Heliconian Neptune ; and as those of Priene valued themselves upon being originally of Helice, they chose for the king of the sacrifice a young Prienian. It is needless to dispute from whence the poet has taken his comparison ; for as he lived 100, or 121 years after the Ionic migration, it cannot be doubted but he took it in the Asian Ionia, and at Priene itself ; where he had probably often assisted at that sacrifice, and been witness of the ceremonies therein observed. This poet always appears strongly addicted to the customs of the Ionians, which makes some conjecture that he was an Ionian himself. Eustathius. Dacier.

ψ. 571. *Then fell on Polydore his vengeful rage.]*

(Whose feet for swiftness in the race surpass)

Of all his sons, the dearest, and the last.

To the forbidden field he takes his flight

475

In the first folly of a youthful knight,

To vaunt his swiftness wheels around the plain,

But vaunts not long, with all his swiftness slain.

Struck where the crossing belts unite behind,

And golden rings the double back-plate join'd :

480

Forth thro' the navel burst the thrilling steel ;

And on his knees with piercing shrieks he fell ;

'The rushing entrails pour'd upon the ground

His hands collect ; and darkness wraps him round.

When Hector view'd, all ghastly in his gore

485

Thus sadly slain, th' unhappy Polydore ;

A cloud of sorrow overcast his sight,

His soul no longer brook'd the distant sight,

Full in Achilles' dreadful front he came,

And shook his jav'lin like a waving flame.

490

Euripides in his *Hecuba* has followed another tradition, when he makes Polydorus the son of Priam and of Hecuba, and slain by Polymnestor king of Thrace, after the taking of Troy ; for according to Homer, he is not the son of Hecuba, but of Laothoe, as he says in the following book, and is slain by Achilles. Virgil too has rather chosen to follow Euripides than Homer.

ÿ. 489. *Full in Achilles' dreadful front he came.*] The great judgment of the poet in keeping the character of his hero, is in this place very evident : when Achilles was to engage Æneas, he holds a long conference with him, and with patience bears the reply of Æneas : had he pursued the same method with Hector, he had departed from his character. Anger is the prevailing pas-

The son of Peleus sees, with joy possess,
 His heart high-bounding in his rising breast:
 And, lo! the man, on whom black fates attend;
 The man, that slew Achilles, in his friend!
 No more shall Hector's and Pelides' spear 495
 Turn from each other in the walks of war—
 Then with revengeful eyes he scan'd him o'er:
 Come, and receive thy fate! he spake no more.

Hector, undaunted, thus. Such words employ
 To one that dreads thee, some unwarlike boy: 500
 Such we could give, defying and defy'd,
 Mean intercourse of obloquy and pride!
 I know thy force to mine superior far;
 But heav'n alone confers success in war:
 Mean as I am, the Gods may guide my dart, 505
 And give it entrance in a braver heart.

Then parts the lance: but Pallas' heav'nly breath
 Far from Achilles wafts the winged death:
 The bidden dart again to Hector flies,
 And at the feet of its great master lies. 510
 Achilles closes with his hated foe,
 His heart and eyes with flaming fury glow:

tion in Achilles: he left the field in a rage against Agamemnon, and entered it again to be revenged of Hector: the poet therefore judiciously makes him take fire at the sight of his enemy: he describes him as impatient to kill him, he gives him a haughty challenge, and that challenge is comprehended in a single line: his impatience to be revenged, would not suffer him to delay it by a length of words.

But present to his aid, Apollo shrouds

The favour'd hero in a veil of clouds.

Thrice struck Pelides with indignant heart, 515

Thrice in impassive air he plung'd the dart:

The spear a fourth time bury'd in the cloud,

He foams with fury, and exclaims aloud.

Wretch! thou hast escap'd again, once more thy flight

Has sav'd thee, and the partial God of light. 520

But long thou shalt not thy just fate withstand,

If any power assist Achilles' hand.

Fly then inglorious! but thy flight this day

Whole hecatombs of Trojan ghosts shall pay.

With that, he gluts his rage on numbers slain: 525

Then Dryops tumbled to th' ensanguin'd plain,

Pierc'd thro' the neck: he left him panting there,

And stopp'd Demuchus, great Philetor's heir,

ψ. 513. *But present to his aid, Apollo.*] It is a common observation, that a God should never be introduced into a poem but where his presence is necessary. And it may be asked why the life of Hector is of such importance that Apollo should rescue him from the hand of Achilles here, and yet suffer him to fall so soon after? Eustathius answers, that the poet had not yet sufficiently exalted the valour of Achilles, he takes time to enlarge upon his achievements, and rises by degrees in his character, till he completes both his courage and resentment at one blow in the death of Hector. And the poet, adds he, pays a great compliment to his favourite countryman, by shewing that nothing but the intervention of a God could have saved Æneas and Hector from the hand of Achilles.

Gigantic chief! deep gash'd th' enormous blade,
And for the soul an ample passage made. 530

Laogonus and Dardanus expire,
The valiant sons of an unhappy fire;
Both in one instant from the chariot hurl'd,
Sunk in one instant to the nether world;
This diff'rence only their sad fates afford, 535
That one the spear destroy'd, and one the sword.

Nor less unpity'd, young Alastor bleeds;
In vain his youth, in vain his beauty pleads:
In vain he begs thee with a suppliant's moan,
To spare a form, an age so like thy own! 540
Unhappy boy! no pray'r, no moving art,
E'er bent that fierce, inexorable heart!
While yet he trembled at his knees, and cry'd,
The ruthless falchion ope'd his tender side;

ψ. 541. — *No pray'r, no moving art
E'er bent that fierce, inexorable heart!*]

I confess it is a satisfaction to me, to observe with what art the poet pursues his subject: the opening of the poem professes to treat of the anger of Achilles; that anger draws on all the great events of the story: and Homer at every opportunity awakens the reader to an attention to it, by mentioning the effects of it: so that when we see in this place the hero deaf to youth and compassion, it is what we expect: mercy in him would offend, because it is contrary to his character. Homer proposes him not as a pattern for imitation; but the moral of the poem which he designed the reader should draw from it, is, that we should avoid anger, since it is ever pernicious in the event.

The painting liver pours a flood of gore 545
That drowns his bosom till he pants no more.

Thro' Mulius' head then drove th' impetuous spear,
The warrior falls, transfix'd from ear to ear.
Thy life, Echeclus! next the sword bereaves,
Deep thro' the front the pond'rous faulchion cleaves; 550
Warm'd in the brain the smoaking weapon lies,
The purple death comes floating o'er his eyes.
Then brave Deucalion dy'd: the dart was flung
Where the knit nerves the pliant elbow strung;
He dropt his arm, an unassisting weight, 555
And stood all impotent, expecting fate:
Full on his neck the falling faulchion sped,
From his broad shoulders hew'd his crested head:
Forth from the bone the spinal marrow flies,
And sunk in dust, the corps extended lies. 560
Rhigmus, whose race from fruitful Thracia came,
(The son of Pireus, an illustrious name,) 565
Succeeds to fate: the spear his belly rends;
Prone from his car the thund'ring chief descends:
The squire, who saw expiring on the ground
His prostrate master, rein'd the steeds around:
His back scarce turn'd the Pelian jav'lin gor'd;
And stretch'd the servant o'er his dying lord.
As when a flame the winding valley fills,
And runs on crackling shrubs between the hills; 570
Then o'er the stubble up the mountain flies,
Fires the high woods, and blazes to the skies,

This way and that, the spreading torrent rores;
 So sweeps the hero thro' the wasted shores;
 Around him wide, immense destruction pours, 575
 And earth is delug'd with the sanguine show'rs.
 As with autumnal harvests cover'd o'er,
 And thick bestrown, lies Ceres' sacred floor,
 When round and round, with never-weary'd pain,
 The trampling steers beat out th' un-number'd grain. 580

ψ. 580. *The trampling steers beat out th' un-number'd grain.*] In Greece, instead of threshing the corn as we do, they caused it to be trod out by oxen; this was likewise practised in Judæa, as is seen by the law of God, who forbade the Jews to muzzle the ox who trod out the corn. *Non ligabis os bovis terentis in area fruges tuas.* Deut. xxv. Dacier.

The same practice is still preserved among the Turks and modern Greeks.

The similes at the end.] It is usual with our author to heap his similes very thick together at the conclusion of a book. He has done the same in the seventeenth: it is the natural discharge of a vast imagination, heated in its progress, and giving itself vent in this croud of images.

I cannot close the notes upon this book, without observing the dreadful idea of Achilles, which the poet leaves upon the mind of the reader. He drives his chariot over shields, and mangled heaps of slain: the wheels, the axle-tree, and the horses are stained with blood, the hero's eyes burn with fury, and his hands are red with slaughter. A painter might form from this passage the picture of Mars in the fullness of his terrors, as well as Phidias is said to have drawn from another, that of Jupiter in all his majesty.

So the fierce coursers, as the chariot rolls,
Tread down whole ranks, and crush out heroes souls.
Dash'd from their hoofs while o'er the dead they fly,
Black, bloody drops the smoaking chariot dye:
The spiky wheels thro' heaps of carnage tore; 585
And thick the groaning axles dropp'd with gore.
High o'er the scene of death Achilles stood,
All grim with dust, all horrible in blood:
Yet still insatiate, still with rage on flame;
Such is the lust of never dying fame! 590

T H E
I L I A D.
B O O K XXI.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The battel in the river Scamander.

THE Trojans fly before Achilles, some towards the town, others to the river Scamander: he falls upon the latter with great slaughter, takes twelve captives alive, to sacrifice to the shade of Patroclus; and kills Lycaon and Asteropæus. Scamander attacks him with all his waves: Neptune and Pallas assist the hero; Simois joins Scamander; at length Vulcan, by the instigation of Juno, almost dries up the river. This combat ended, the other Gods engage each other. Meanwhile Achilles continues the slaughter, drives the rest into Troy: Agenor only makes a stand, and is conveyed away in a cloud by Apollo; who (to delude Achilles) takes upon him Agenor's shape, and while he pursues him in that disguise, gives the Trojans an opportunity of retiring into their city. The same day continues. The scene is on the banks and in the stream of Scamander.

AND now to Xanthus' gliding stream they drove,
Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove,
The river here divides the flying train.
Part to the town fly diverse o'er the plain,

This book is intirely different from all the foregoing: though it be a battel, it is intirely of a new and

Where late their troops triumphant bore the fight, 5
 Now chas'd, and trembling in ignoble flight :
 (These with a gather'd mist Saturnia shrouds,
 And rolls behind the rout a heap of clouds)
 Part plunge into the stream: old Xanthus rores,
 The flashing billows beat the whiten'd shores: 10
 With cries promiscuous all the banks resound,
 And here, and there, in eddies whirling round,
 The flouncing steeds and shrieking warriors drown'd. }

surprising kind, diversified with a vast variety of imagery and description. The scene is totally changed: he paints the combate of his hero with the rivers, and describes a battel amidst an inundation. It is observable, that though the whole war of the Iliad was upon the banks of these rivers, Homer has artfully left out the machinery of river-gods in all the other battels, to aggrandize this of his hero. There is no book of the poem that has more force of imagination, or in which the great and inexhausted invention of our author is more powerfully exerted. After this description of an inundation, there follows a very beautiful contrast in that of the drought: the part of Achilles is admirably sustained, and the new strokes which Homer gives to his picture are such, as are derived from the very source of his character, and finish the intire draught of this hero.

How far all that appears wonderful or extravagant in this episode, may be reconciled to probability, truth and natural reason, will be considered in a distinct note on that head: the reader may find it on *ψ*. 447.

ψ. 2. *Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove.*] The river is here said to be the son of Jupiter, on account of its being supplied with waters that fall from Jupiter, that is, from heaven. Eustathius.

As the scorch'd locusts from their fields retire,
 While fast behind them runs the blaze of fire; 15
 Driv'n from the land before the smoaky cloud,
 The clust'ring legions rush into the flood:
 So plung'd in Xanthus by Achilles' force,
 Roars the resounding surge with men and horse.

Ÿ. 14. *As the scorch'd locusts, etc.*] Eustathius observes that several countries have been much infested with armies of locusts; and that, to prevent their destroying the fruits of the earth, the countrymen by kindling large fires drove them from their fields; the locusts to avoid the intense heat were forced to cast themselves into the water. From this observation the poet draws his allusion, which is very much to the honour of Achilles, since it represents the Trojans with respect to him as no more than so many insects.

The same commentator takes notice, that because the island of Cyprus in particular was used to practise this method with the locusts, some authors have conjectured that Homer was of that country. But if this were a sufficient reason for such a supposition, he might be said to be born in almost all the countries of the world, since he draws his observations from the customs of them all.

We may hence account for the innumerable armies of these locusts, mentioned among the plagues of Ægypt, without having recourse to an immediate creation, as some good men have imagined, whereas the miracle indeed consists in the wonderful manner of bringing them upon the Ægyptians. I have often observed with pleasure the similitude which many of Homer's expressions bear with the holy scriptures, and that the most ancient heathen writer in the world, often speaks in the idiom of Moses: thus as the locusts in Exodus are said to be driven into the sea, so in Homer they are forced into a river.

His bloody lance the hero casts aside, 20
 (Which spreading tam'risks on the margin hide)
 Then, like a God, the rapid billows braves,
 Arm'd with his sword, high-brandish'd o'er the waves :
 Now down he plunges, now he whirls it round,
 Deep groan'd the waters with the dying sound ; 25
 Repeated wounds the red'ning river dy'd,
 And the warm purple circled on the tide.
 Swift thro' the foamy flood the Trojans fly,
 And close in rocks or winding caverns lie.
 So the huge dolphin tempesting the main, 30
 In shoals before him fly the scaly train.
 Confus'dly heap'd they seek their inmost caves,
 Or pant and heave beneath the floating waves.
 Now tir'd with slaughter, from the Trojan band
 Twelve chosen youths he drags alive to land ; 35

ψ. 30. *So the huge Dolphin, etc.*] It is observable with what justness the author diversifies his comparisons according to the different scenes and elements he is engaged in: Achilles has been hitherto on the land, and compared to land-animals, a lion, etc. Now he is in the water, the poet derives his images from thence, and likens him to a dolphin. Eustathius.

ψ. 34. *Now tir'd with slaughter.*] This is admirably well suited to the character of Achilles, his rage bears him headlong on the enemy, he kills all that oppose him, and stops not, until nature itself could not keep pace with his anger; he had determined to reserve twelve noble youths to sacrifice them to the Manes of Patroclus, but his resentment gives him no time to think of them, until the hurry of his passion abates, and he is tired with slaughter: without this circumstance, I think

With their rich belts their captive arms, constrains,
(Late their proud ornaments, but now their chains.)
These his attendants to the ships convey'd,
Sad victims! destin'd to Patroclus' shade.

an objection might naturally be raised, that in the time of a pursuit Achilles gave the enemy too much leisure to escape, while he busied himself with tying these prisoners: though it is not absolutely necessary to suppose he tyed them with his own hands.

ψ. 35. *Twelve chosen youths.*] This piece of cruelty in Achilles has appeared shocking to many, and indeed is what I think can only be excused by considering the ferocious and vindictive spirit of this hero. It is however certain that the cruelties exercised on enemies in war were authorised by the military laws of those times; nay, religion itself became a sanction to them. It is not only the fierce Achilles, but the pious and religious Æneas, whose very character is virtue and compassion, that reserves several young unfortunate captives taken in battel, to sacrifice them to the Manes of his favourite hero. Æn. 10. ψ. 517.

—————*Sulmone creatos*

*Quatuor hic juvenes, totidem quos educat Ufens
Viventes rapit; inferias quos immolet umbris,
Captivæque rogi perfundat sanguine flammæ.*

And Æn. 11. ψ. 81.

*Vinxerat et post terga manus, quos mitteret umbris,
Inferias, cæso sparsuros sanguine flammam.*

And (what is very particular) the Latin poet expresses no disapprobation of the action, which the Grecian does in plain terms, speaking of this in Iliad 23. ψ. 176.

-----*Κακά δὲ φρεσὶ μῆδετο ἔργα.*

Then, as once more he plung'd amid the flood, 40
 The young Lycaon in his passage stood;
 The son of Priam, whom the hero's hand
 But late made captive in his father's land,
 (As from a sycamore, his sounding steel
 Lopp'd the green arms to spoke a chariot-wheel) 45
 To Lemnos isle he sold the royal slave,
 Where Jason's son the price demanded gave;
 But kind Eetion touching on the shore,
 The ransom'd prince to fair Arisbe bore.
 Ten days were past, since in his father's reign 50
 He felt the sweets of liberty again;

v. 41. *The young Lycaon, etc.*] Homer has a wonderful art and judgment in contriving such incidents as set the characteristic qualities of his heroes in the highest point of light. There is hardly any in the whole Iliad more proper to move pity than this circumstance of Lycaon; or to raise terror, than this view of Achilles. It is also the finest picture of them both imaginable: we see the different attitude of their persons, and the different passions which appeared in their countenances: at first Achilles stands erect, with surprize in his looks at the sight of one whom he thought it impossible to find there; while Lycaon is in the posture of a suppliant, with looks that plead for compassion; with one hand holding the hero's lance, and his knee with the other: afterwards, when at his death he lets go the spear, and places himself on his knees with his arms extended, to receive the mortal wound, how lively and how strongly is this painted! I believe every one perceives the beauty of this passage, and allows that poetry (at least in Homer) is truly a speaking picture.

The next, that God whom men in vain withstand,
 Gives the same youth to the same conqu'ring hand;
 Now never to return! and doom'd to go
 A sadder journey to the shades below. 55
 His well-known face when great Achilles ey'd,
 (The helm and visor he had cast aside
 With wild affright, and drop'd upon the field
 His usefess lance and unavailing shield.)
 As trembling, panting, from the stream he fled, 60
 And knock'd his fault'ring knees, the hero said.

Ye mighty Gods! what wonders strike my view!
 Is it in vain our conqu'ring arms subdue?
 Sure I shall see yon' heaps of Trojans kill'd,
 Rise from the shades, and brave me on the field: 65
 As now the captive, whom so late I bound
 And sold to Lemnos, stalks on Trojan ground!
 Not him the sea's unmeasur'd deeps detain,
 That barr such numbers from their native plain:
 Lo! he returns. Try then, my flying spear! 70
 Try, if the grave can hold the wanderer;
 If earth at length this active prince can seize,
 Earth, whose strong grasp has held down Hercules.

Thus while he spake, the Trojan, pale with fears
 Approach'd, and sought his knees with suppliant tears; 75
 Loth as he was to yield his youthful breath,
 And his soul shiv'ring at th' approach of death.
 Achilles rais'd the spear, prepar'd to wound;
 He kiss'd his feet, extended on the ground:

And while above the spear suspended stood, 80
 Longing to dip its thirsty point in blood,
 One hand embrac'd them close, one stopt the dart;
 While thus these melting words attempt his heart.

Thy well-known captive, great Achilles! see,
 Once more Lycaon trembles at thy knee. 85
 Some pity to a suppliant's name afford,
 Who shar'd the gifts of Ceres at thy board;
 Whom late thy conqu'ring arm to Lemnos bore,
 Far from his father, friends, and native shore;

✱ 84. *The speeches of Lycaon and Achilles.*] It is impossible for any thing to be better imagined than these two speeches: that of Lycaon is moving and compassionate; that of Achilles haughty and dreadful; the one pleads with the utmost tenderness, the other denies with the utmost sternness: one would think it impossible to amass so many moving arguments in so few words as those of Lycaon: he forgets no circumstance to soften his enemy's anger, he flatters the memory of Patroclus, is afraid of being thought too nearly related to Hector, and would willingly put himself upon him as a suppliant, and consequently as an inviolable person: but Achilles is immoveable, his resentment makes him deaf to intreaties, and it must be remembered that anger, not mercy, is his character.

I must confess I could have wished Achilles had spared him: there are so many circumstances that speak in his favour, that he deserved his life, had he not asked it in terms a little too abject.

There is an air of greatness in the conclusion of the speech of Achilles, which strikes me very much: he speaks very unconcernedly of his own death, and upbraids his enemy for asking life so earnestly, a life that was of so much less importance than his own.

A hundred oxen were his price that day, 90

Now fums immense thy mercy shall repay.

Scarce respited from woes I yet appear,

And scarce twelve morning funs have seen me here ;

Lo ! Jove again fubmits me to thy hands,

Again, her victim cruel fate demands ! 95

I fprung from Priam, and Laothoe fair,

(Old Alce's daughter, and Lelegia's heir ;

Who held in Pedafus his fam'd abode,

And rul'd the fields where filver Satnio flow'd)

Two fons (alas ! unhappy fons) fhe bore ; } 100

For ah ! one fpear fhall drink each brother's gore, }

And I fucceed to fllaughter'd Polydore. }

How from that arm of terror fhall I fly ?

Some dæmon urges ! 'tis my doom to die !

If ever yet foft pity touch'd thy mind, 105

Ah ! think not me too much of Hector's kind !

Not the fame mother gave thy fuppliant breath,

With his, who wrought thy lov'd Patroclus' death.

Thefe words, attended with a fhew'r of tears,

The youth addreff to unrelenting ears : 110

Talk not of life, or ranfom, (he replies)

Patroclus dead, whoever meets me, dies :

In vain a fingle Trojan fues for grace ;

But leaft, the fons of Priam's hateful race.

Die then, my friend ! what boots it to deplore ? 115

The great, the good Patroclus is no more !

He, far thy better, was foredoom'd to die,

“ And thou, doft thou, bewail mortality ?

See'st thou not me, whom nature's gifts adorn,
 Sprung from a hero, from a Goddess born; 120
 The day shall come (which nothing can avert)
 When by the spear, the arrow, or the dart,
 By night, or day, by force or by design,
 Impending death and certain fate are mine.
 Die then—he said; and as the word he spoke, 125
 The fainting stripling sunk, before the stroke:
 His hand forgot its grasp, and left the spear;
 While all his trembling frame confess'd his fear.
 Sudden, Achilles his broad sword display'd,
 And buried in his neck the recking blade. 130
 Prone fell the youth; and panting on the land,
 The gushing purple dy'd the thirsty sand:
 The victor to the stream the carcass gave,
 And thus insults him, floating on the wave.
 Lie there, Lycaon! let the fish surround 135
 Thy bloated corse, and suck thy goary wound:
 There no sad mother shall thy fun'ral weep,
 But swift Scamander roll thee to the deep,
 Whose ev'ry wave some wat'ry monster brings,
 To feast unpunish'd on the fat of kings. 140

v. 121. *The day shall come——*

When by the spear, the arrow, or the dart.

This is not spoken at random, but with an air of superiority; when Achilles says he shall fall by an arrow, a dart or a spear, he insinuates that no man will have the courage to approach him in a close fight, or engage him hand to hand. Eustathius.

So perish Troy, and all the Trojan line !
 Such ruin theirs, and such compassion mine.
 What boots ye now Scamander's worship'd stream,
 His earthly honours, and immortal name !
 In vain your immolated bulls are slain, 145
 Your living courfers glut his gulphs in vain :
 Thus he rewards you, with this bitter fate ;
 Thus, till the Grecian vengeance is compleat ;
 Thus is aton'd Patroclus' honour'd shade,
 And the short absence of Achilles paid. 150

These boastful words provoke the raging God ;
 With fury swells the violated flood.

ψ. 146. *Your living courfers glut his gulphs in vain.*] It was an ancient custom to cast living horses into the sea, and into rivers, to honour, as it were, by these victims, the rapidity of their streams. This practice continued a long time, and history supplies us with examples of it: Aurelius Victor says of Pompey the younger, *Cum mari feliciter uteretur, Neptuni se filium confessus est, eumque bobus auratis et equo placavit.* He offered oxen in sacrifice, and threw a living horse into the sea; as appears from Dion, which is perfectly conformable to this of Homer. Eustathius. Dacier.

ψ. 152. *With fury swells the violated flood.*] The poet has been preparing us for the episode of the river Xanthus ever since the beginning of the last book; and here he gives us an account why the river wars upon Achilles: it is not only because he is a river of Troas, but, as Eustathius remarks, because it is in defence of a man that was descended from a brother river-God: he was angry too with Achilles on another account, because he had choaked up his current with the bodies of his countrymen, the Trojans.

What means divine may yet the pow'r employ,
 To check Achilles, and to rescue Troy ?
 Meanwhile the hero springs in arms, to dare 155
 The great Asteropæus to mortal war ;
 The son of Pelagon, whose lofty line
 Flows from the source of Axius, stream divine !
 (Fair Peribæa's love the God had crown'd,
 With all his reflux waters circled round) 160
 On him Achilles rush'd: he fearless stood,
 And shook two spears, advancing from the flood ;
 The flood impell'd him, on Pelides' head
 T' avenge his waters choak'd with heaps of dead,
 Near as they drew, Achilles thus began. 165

What art thou, boldest of the race of man ?
 Who, or from whence ? Unhappy is the fire,
 Whose son encounters our resistless ire.

O son of Peleus ! what avails to trace
 (Reply'd the warrior) our illustrious race ? 170
 From rich Pæonia's valleys I command
 Arms with protended spears, my native band ;

ψ. 171. *From rich Pæonia's—etc.*] In the catalogue Pyræchmes is said to be commander of the Pæonians, where they are described as bow-men ; but here they are said to be armed with spears, and to have Asteropæus for their general. Eustathius tells us, some critics asserted that this line in the Cat. ψ. 355.

Ἦπλεγόνος θ' υἱὸς περιδείξιος Ἀστεροπαῖος,
 followed

Ἀυτὰρ Πυραΐχμης ἄγε Παίονας ἀγκυλοστόχους.

But I see no reason for such an assertion. Homer has

Now shines the tenth bright morning since I came
In aid of Ilion to the fields of fame :

Axius, who swells with all the neighb'ring rills, 175

And wide around the floated region fills,

Begot my fire, whose spear such glory won :

Now lift thy arm, and try that hero's son !

Threat'ning he said : the hostile chiefs advance :

At once Asteropus discharg'd each lance, 180

(For both his dext'rous hands the lance cou'd wield)

One struck, but pierc'd not the Vulcanian shield ;

One raz'd Achilles' hand ; the spouting blood

Spun forth, in earth the fasten'd weapon stood.

Like lightning next the Pelian jav'lin flies : 185

Its erring fury hiss'd along the skies :

Deep in the swelling bank was driv'n the spear,

Ev'n to the middle earth'd ; and quiver'd there.

expressly told us in this speech that it was but ten days since he came to the aid of Troy ; he might be made general of the Pæonians upon the death of Pyræchmes, who was killed in the sixteenth book. Why also might not the Pæonians, as well as Teucer, excel in the management both of the bow and the spear ?

ψ. 187. *Deep in the swelling bank was driv'n the spear
Ev'n to the middle earth'd,———]*

It was impossible for the poet to give us a greater idea of the strength of Achilles than he has by this circumstance ; his spear pierced so deep into the ground, that another hero of great strength could not disengage it by repeated efforts ; but immediately after, Achilles draws it with the utmost ease : how prodigious was the force of that arm that could drive at one throw a spear half way into the earth, and then with a touch release it ?

Then from his side the sword Pelides drew,
And on his foe with doubled fury flew. 190

The foe thrice tugg'd, and shook the rooted wood;
Repulsive of his might the weapon stood:
The fourth, he tries to break the spear in vain;
Bent as he stands, he tumbles to the plain;
His belly open'd with a ghastly wound, 195
The reeking entrails pour upon the ground.

Beneath the hero's feet he panting lies,
And his eye darkens, and his spirit flies:
While the proud victor thus triumphing said,
His radiant armour tearing from the dead: 200

So ends thy glory! such the fate they prove
Who strive presumptuous with the sons of Jove.
Sprung from a river didst thou boast thy line,
But great Saturnius is the source of mine.
How durst thou vaunt thy wat'ry progeny? 205
Of Peleus, Æacus, and Jove, am I;

The race of these superior far to those,
As he that thunders to the stream that flows.
What rivers can, Scamander might have shown;
But Jove he dreads, nor wars against his son. 210

Ev'n Achelous might contend in vain,
And all the roaring billows of the main.
Th' eternal Ocean, from whose fountains flow
The seas, the rivers, and the springs below,
The thund'ring voice of Jove abhors to hear, 215
And in his deep abysses shakes with fear.

He

-He said; then from the bank his jav'lin tore,
 And left the breathless warrior in his gore.
 The floating tides the bloody carcass lave,
 And beat against it, wave succeeding wave; 220
 Till roll'd between the banks, it lies the food
 Of curling eels, and fishes of the flood.
 All scatter'd round the stream (their mightiest slain)
 Th' amaz'd Pæonians scour along the plain:
 He vents his fury on the flying crew, 225
 Thraſius, Aſttypylus, and Mneſus ſlew;
 Mydon, Therſilochus, with Ænias fell;
 And numbers more his lance had plung'd to hell;
 But from the bottom of his gulphs profound,
 Scamander ſpoke; the ſhores return'd the ſound. 230

O firſt of mortals! (for the Gods are thine)
 In valour matchleſs, and in force divine!
 If Jove have giv'n thee ev'ry Trojan head,
 'Tis not on me thy rage ſhould heap the dead.
 See! my choak'd ſtreams no more their courſe can keep,
 Nor roll their wonted tribute to the deep. 236

Turn then, impetuous! from our injur'd flood:
 Content, thy ſlaughters could amaze a God.

In human form confeſs'd before his eyes
 The river thus; and thus the chief replies. 240
 O ſacred ſtream! thy word we ſhall obey;
 But not till Troy the deſtin'd vengeance pay,
 Not till within her tow'rs the perjur'd train
 Shall pant, and tremble at our arms again;

Not till proud Hector, guardian of her wall, 245
Or stain this lance, or see Achilles fall.

He said; and drove with fury on the foe.
Then to the Godhead of the silver bow
The yellow flood began: O son of Jove!
Was not the mandate of the sire above 250
Full and express? that Phœbus should employ
His sacred arrows in defence of Troy,
And make her conquer, till Hyperion's fall
In awful darkness hide the face of all?

He spoke in vain—the chief without dismay 255
Ploughs thro' the boiling surge his desp'rate way.
Then rising in his rage above the shores,
From all his deep the bellowing river rores,
Huge héaps of slain disgorges on the coast,
And round the banks the ghastly dead are tost. 260
While all before, the billows rang'd on high
(A wat'ry bulwark) skreen the bands who fly.
Now bursting on his head with thund'ring sound,
The falling deluge whelms the hero round:

Y. 263. *Now bursting on his head, etc.*] There is a great beauty in the versification of this whole passage in Homer: some of the verses run hoarse, full and sonorous, like the torrent they describe; others by their broken cadences, and sudden stops, image the difficulty, labour and interruption of the hero's march against it. The fall of the elm, the tearing up of the bank, the rushing of the branches in the water, are all put into such words, that almost every letter corresponds in its sound, and echoes to the sense, of each particular.

His loaded shield bends to the rushing tide; 265
 His feet, upborn, scarce the strong flood divide,
 Slidd'ring, and stagg'ring. On the border stood
 A spreading elm, that overhung the flood;
 He seiz'd a bending bough, his steps to stay;
 The plant uprooted to his weight gave way, 270
 Heaving the bank, and undermining all;
 Loud flash the waters to the rushing fall
 Of the thick foliage. The large trunk display'd
 Bridg'd the rough flood acrofs: the hero stay'd
 On this his weight, and rais'd upon his hand, 275
 Leap'd from the chanel, and regain'd the land.

ψ. 274. *Bridg'd the rough flood acrofs*———] If we had no other account of the river Xanthus but this, it were alone sufficient to shew that the current could not be very wide; for the poet here says that the elm stretch'd from bank to bank, and as it were made a bridge over it: the suddenness of this inundation perfectly well agrees with a narrow river.

ψ. 276. *Leap'd from the chanel.*] Eustathius recites a criticism on this verse; in the original the word *λίμνη* signifies *Stagnum*, *Palus*, a *standing water*; now this is certainly contrary to the idea of a river, which always implies a *current*: to solve this, says that author, some have supposed that the tree which lay acrofs the river stopped the flow of the waters, and forced them to spread as it were into a pool. Others, dissatisfied with this solution, think that a mistake is crept into the text, and that instead of *ἐκ λίμνης*, should be inserted *ἐκ διύνης*. But I do not see the necessity of having recourse to either of these solutions; for why may not the word *λίμνη* signify here the *chanel* of the river, as it evidently does in the 317th verse? And nothing being more common

Then blacken'd the wild waves; the murmur rose;
 The God pursues, a huger billow throws,
 And bursts the bank, ambitious to destroy
 The man whose fury is the fate of Troy. 280
 He, like the warlike eagle speeds his pace,
 (Swiftest and strongest of th' aerial race)
 Far as a spear can fly, Achilles springs
 At ev'ry bound; his clanging armour rings:
 Now here, now there, he turns on ev'ry side, 285
 And winds his course before the following tide;
 The waves flow after, wheresoe'er he wheels,
 And gather fast, and murmur at his heels.
 So when a peasant to his garden brings
 Soft rills of water from the bubbling springs, 290

than to substitute a part for the whole, why may not the chanel be supposed to imply the whole river?

ψ. 289. *So when a peasant to his garden brings, etc.* This changing of the character is very beautiful: no poet ever knew, like Homer, to pass from the vehement and the nervous, to the gentle and agreeable; such transitions, when properly made, give a singular pleasure, as when in music a master passes from the rough to the tender. Demetrius Phalereus, who only praises this comparison for its clearness, has not sufficiently recommended its beauty and value. Virgil has transferred it into his first book of the Georgics, ψ. 106.

Deinde satis fluvium inducit, rivisque sequentes:

Et cum exustus ager morientibus æstuat herbis,

Ecce supercilio clivosi tramitis undam.

Elicit: Illa cadens raucum per levia murmur

Saxa ciet, scatebrisque arentia temperat arva.

And calls the floods from high, to bless his bow'rs,
 And feed with pregnant streams the plants and flow'rs;
 Soon as he clears whate'er their passage staid,
 And marks the future current with his spade,
 Swift o'er the rolling pebbles, down the hills 295
 Louder and louder purl the falling rills,
 Before him scatt'ring, they prevent his pains,
 And shine in mazy wand'rings o'er the plains.

Still flies Achilles, but before his eyes
 Still swift Scamander rolls where-e'er he flies : 300
 Not all his speed escapes the rapid floods;
 The first of men, but not a match for Gods.
 Oft' as he turn'd the torrent to oppose,
 And bravely try if all the pow'rs were foes;
 So oft' the surge, in wat'ry mountains spread, 305
 Beat on his back, or bursts upon his head.
 Yet dauntless still the adverse flood he braves,
 And still indignant bounds above the waves.
 Tir'd by the tides, his knees relax with toil;
 Wash'd from beneath him slides the slimy soil; 310
 When thus (his eyes on heav'n's expansion thrown)
 Forth bursts the hero with an angry groan.

Is there no God Achilles to befriend,
 No pow'r t' avert his miserable end?
 Prevent, oh Jove! this ignominious date, 315
 And make my future life the sport of fate.
 Of all heav'n's oracles believ'd in vain,
 But most of Thetis, must her son complain;

By Phœbus' darts the prophesy'd my fall,
 In glorious arms before the Trojan wall.
 Oh ! had I dy'd in fields of battel warm,
 Stretch'd like a hero, by a hero's arm !

320

ψ. 321. *Oh had I dy'd in fields of battel warm! etc.]*
 Nothing is more agreeable than this wish to the heroic
 character of Achilles: glory is his prevailing passion;
 he grieves not that he must die, but that he should die
 unlike a man of honour. Virgil has made use of the
 same thought in the same circumstance, where Æneas is
 in danger of being drowned, Æn. 1. ψ. 98.

———— *O terque quaterque beati,
 Quis ante ora patrum Trojæ sub mœnibus altis
 Contigit oppetere! O Danaum fortissime gentis
 Tydide, mene Iliacis occumbere campis
 Non potuisse? tuaque animam hanc effundere dextra?*

Lucan in the fifth book of his Pharsalia, representing
 Cæsar in the same circumstance, has (I think) carried
 yet farther the character of ambition, and a boundless
 thirst of glory, in his hero; when, after he has repined
 in the same manner with Achilles, he acquiesces at last
 in the reflection of the glory he had already acquired;

————— *Licet ingentes abruperit actus
 Festinata dies fati, sat magna peregi.
 Arctœas domui gentes: Inimica subegi
 Arma manu: Vidit Magnum mihi Roma secundum.*

And only wishes that his obscure fate might be conceal-
 ed, in the view that all the world might still fear and ex-
 pect him.

————— *Lacerum retinete cadaver
 Fluctibus in mediis; desint mihi busta, rogusque,
 Dum metuar semper terraque expecter ab omni.*

Might Hector's spear this dauntless bosom rend,
And my swift soul o'ertake my slaughter'd friend !

Ah no ! Achilles meets a shameful fate, 325

Oh how unworthy of the brave and great !

Like some vile swain, whom on a rainy day,

Crossing a ford, the torrent sweeps away,

An unregarded carcase to the sea. }

Neptune and Pallas haste to his relief, 330

And thus in human form address the chief:

The pow'r of Ocean first. Forbear thy fear,

Oh son of Peleus ! Lo thy Gods appear !

Behold ! from Jove descending to thy aid,

Propitious Neptune, and the blue-ey'd maid. 335

Stay, and the furious flood shall cease to rave :

'Tis not thy fate to glut his angry wave.

But thou, the counsel heav'n suggests, attend !

Nor breathe from combate, nor thy sword suspend,

'Till Troy receive her flying sons, 'till all 340

Her routed squadrons pant behind their wall :

Hector alone shall stand his fatal chance,

And Hector's blood shall smoke upon thy lance.

Thine is the glory doom'd. Thus spake the Gods :

Then swift ascended to the bright abodes. 345

Stung with new ardour, thus by heav'n impell'd,

He springs impetuous, and invades the field :

O'er all th' expanded plain the waters spread ;

Heav'd on the bounding billows danc'd the dead,

Floating 'midst scatter'd arms ; while casques of gold 350

And turn'd-up bucklers glitter'd as they roll'd.

High o'er the surging tide, by leaps and bounds,
 He wades, and mounts; the parted wave resounds.
 Not a whole river stops the hero's course,
 While Pallas fills him with immortal force. 355

With equal rage, indignant Xanthus rores,
 And lifts his billows, and o'erwhelms his shores.

Then thus to Simois: haste, my brother flood!
 And check this mortal that controuls a God:
 Our bravest heroes else shall quit the fight, 360
 And Ilium tumble from her tow'ry height.

Call then thy subject streams, and bid them rore,
 From all thy fountains swell thy wat'ry store,
 With broken rocks, and with a load of dead
 Charge the black surge, and pour it on his head. 365

Mark how resistless thro' the floods he goes,
 And boldly bids the warring Gods be foes!

But nor that force, nor form divine to fight
 Shall ought avail him, if our rage unite:

Whelm'd under our dark gulphs those arms shall lie, 370
 That blaze so dreadful in each Trojan eye;
 And deep beneath a sandy mountain hurl'd,
 Immers'd remain this terror of the world.

Such pond'rous ruin shall confound the place,
 No Greek shall e'er his perish'd relicks grace, 375
 No hand his bones shall gather, or inhume;
 These his cold rites, and this his wat'ry tomb.

He said; and on the chief descends amain,
 Increas'd with gore, and swelling with the stain.

Then murm'ring from his beds, he boils, he raves, 380

And a foam whitens on the purple waves :

At ev'ry step, before Achilles stood

The crimson surge, and delug'd him with blood.

Fear touch'd the queen of heav'n: she saw dismay'd,

She call'd aloud, and summon'd Vulcan's aid. 385

Rise to the war ! th' insulting flood requires

Thy wasteful arm : assemble all thy fires !

While to their aid, by our command enjoin'd,

Rush the swift eastern and the western wind :

These from old Ocean at my word shall blow, 390

Pour the red torrent on the wat'ry foe,

Corsets and arms to one bright ruin turn,

And hissing rivers to their bottoms burn.

Go, mighty in thy rage ! display thy pow'r,

Drink the whole flood, the crackling trees devour, 395

Scorch all the banks ! and ('till our voice reclaim)

Exert th' unweari'd furies of the flame !

The pow'r ignipotent her word obeys :

Wide o'er the plain he pours the boundless blaze ;

At once consumes the dead, and dries the soil ; 400

And the shrunk waters in their chanel boil :

As when autumnal Boreas sweeps the sky,

And instant blows the water'd gardens dry :

So look'd the field, so whiten'd was the ground,

While Vulcan breath'd the fiery blast around. 405

ψ. 405. *While Vulcan breath'd the fiery blast around.*]

It is in the original, ψ. 355.

Swift on the sedgy reeds the ruin preys;
Along the margin winds the running blaze :

The trees in flaming rows to ashes turn,
The flow'ry Lotos, and the tam'risk burn.

Broad elm, and cypress rising in a spire;

410

The wat'ry willows hiss before the fire.

Now glow the waves, the fishes pant for breath,

The eels lie twisting in the pangs of death :

Now flounce aloft, now dive the scaly fry,

Or gasping, turn their bellies to the sky.

415

At length the river rear'd his languid head,

And thus, short-panting, to the God he said.

Oh Vulcan ! oh ! what pow'r resists thy might ?

I faint, I sink, unequal to the fight——

I yield——Let Ilion fall ; if fate decree——

420

Ah——bend no more thy fiery arms on me !

He ceas'd ; wide conflagration blazing round ;

The bubling waters yield a hissing sound.

The epithet given to Vulcan in this verse (as well as in the 367th) *Ἡραίοιο πολύφρονος*, has no sort of allusion to the action described : for what has his *wisdom* or *knowledge* to do with burning up the river Xanthus ? This is usual in our author, and much exclaimed against by his modern antagonists, whom Mr. Boileau very well answers. “ It is not so strange in Homer to give these
“ epithets to persons upon occasions which can have
“ no reference to them ; the same is frequent in modern
“ languages, in which we call a man by the name of
“ Saint, when we speak of any action of his that has
“ not the least regard to his *sanctity* : as when we say,
“ for example, that St. Paul held the garments of those
“ who stoned St. Stephen.”

As when the flames beneath a caldron rise,
 To melt the fat of some rich sacrifice, 425
 Amid the fierce embrace of circling fires
 The waters foam, the heavy smoak aspires:
 So boils th' imprison'd flood, forbid to flow,
 And choak'd with vapours, feels his bottom glow.
 To Juno then, imperial queen of air, 430
 The burning river sends his earnest pray'r.

Ah why, Saturnia! must thy son engage
 Me, only me, with all his wasteful rage?
 On other Gods his dreadful arm employ,
 For mightier Gods assert the cause of Troy. 435
 Submissive I desist, if thou command,
 But ah! withdraw this all-destroying hand.
 Hear then my solemn oath, to yield to fate
 Unaided Ilion, and her destin'd state,
 'Till Greece shall gird her with destructive flame, 440
 And in one ruin sink the Trojan name.

Υ. 424. *As when the flames beneath a caldron rise.*]
 It is impossible to render literally such passages with any tolerable beauty. These ideas can never be made to shine in English; some particularities cannot be preserved; but the Greek language gives them lustre, the words are noble and musical.

Ὡς δὲ λέβης ζεῖ ἔνδον ἐπειγόμενος περὶ πολλῶ,
 Κνίσσῃ μελδόμενος ἀπαλοτρεφέος σιάλοιο,
 Πάντοθεν ἀμβολαδὴν, ὑπὸ δὲ ξύλα κάγκανα κείται.

All therefore that can be expected from a translator is to preserve the meaning of the simile, and embellish it with some words of affinity that carry nothing low in the sense or sound.

His warm intreaty touch'd Saturnia's ear:
 She bade th' ignipotent his rage forbear,
 Recall the flame, nor in a mortal cause
 Infest a God: th' obedient flame withdraws: 445
 Again, the branching streams begin to spread,
 And soft re-murmur in their wonted bed.

V. 447. *And soft re-murmur in their wonted bed.*]
 Here ends the *episode* of the *river-fight*; and I must here lay before the reader my thoughts upon the whole of it; which appears to be in part an allegory, and in part a true history. Nothing can give a better idea of Homer's manner of enlivening his inanimate machines, and of making the plainest and simplest incidents noble and poetical, than to consider the whole passage in the common historical sense, which I suppose to be no more than this. There happened a great overflow of the river Xanthus during the siege, which very much incommoded the assailants: this gave occasion for the fiction of an engagement between Achilles and the river-god: Xanthus calling Simois to assist him, implies that these two neighbouring rivers joined in the inundation: Pallas and Neptune relieve Achilles; that is, Pallas, or the *wisdom* of Achilles, found some means to divert the waters, and turn them into the *sea*; wherefore Neptune, the God of it, is feigned to assist him. Jupiter and Juno (by which are understood the aerial regions) consent to aid Achilles; that may signify, that after this great flood there happened a warm, dry, windy season, which assuaged the waters, and dried the ground: and what makes this in a manner plain, is, that Juno (which signifies the *air*) promises to send the *north* and *west winds* to distress the river. Xanthus being consumed by Vulcan, that is, dried up with heat, prays to Juno to relieve him: what is this, but that the drought having drunk up his streams, he has recourse to the *air* for rains

While these by Juno's will the strife resign,
 The warring Gods in fierce contention join:
 Re-kindling rage each heav'nly breast alarms; 450
 With horrid clangor shock'd th' æthereal arms:
 Heav'n in loud thunder bids the trumpet sound;
 And wide beneath them groans the rending ground.
 Jove, as his sport, the dreadful scene descries,
 And views contending Gods with careless eyes. 455

rains to re-supply his current? Or, perhaps the whole may signify no more, than that Achilles being on the farther side of the river, plunged himself in to pursue the enemy; that in this adventure he run the risk of being drowned; that to save himself he laid hold on a fallen tree, which served to keep him a-float; that he was still carried down the stream to the place where was the confluence of the two rivers (which is expressed by the one calling the other to his aid) and that when he came nearer the sea [Neptune] he found means by his prudence [Pallas] to save himself from his danger.

If the reader still should think, the fiction of rivers speaking and fighting is too bold, the objection will vanish by considering how much the heathen mythology authorizes the representation of rivers as persons: nay, even in old historians nothing is more common than stories of rapes committed by river-gods; and the fiction was no way unprecedented, after one of the same nature so well known, as the engagement between Hercules and the river Achelous.

ψ. 454. *Jove, as his sport, the dreadful scene descries,
 And views contending Gods with careless eyes.*]

I was at a loss for the reason why Jupiter is said to smile at the discord of the gods, till I found it in Eustathius; Jupiter, says he, who is the lord of nature, is well pleased with the war of the gods, that is, of earth, sea, and air, etc. because the harmony of all beings arises

The pow'r of battels lifts his brazen spear,
And first assaults the radiant queen of war.

What mov'd thy madness, thus to dis-unite
Æthereal minds, and mix all heav'n in fight?

What wonder this, when in thy frantic mood 460
Thou drov'st a mortal to insult a God;
Thy impious hand Tydides' jav'lin bore,
And madly bath'd it in celestial gore.

He spoke, and smote the loud-resounding shield,
Which bears Jove's thunder on its dreadful field; 465
The adamantine Ægis of her fire,
That turns the glancing bolt, and forked fire.

from that discord: thus earth is opposite to water, air to earth, and water to them all; and yet from this opposition arises that discordant concord by which all nature subsists. Thus heat and cold, moist and dry, are in a continual war, yet upon this depends the fertility of the earth, and the beauty of the creation. So that Jupiter, who according to the Greeks is the soul of all, may well be said to smile at this contention.

ψ. 456. *The power of battels, etc.*] The combat of Mars and Pallas is plainly allegorical: justice and wisdom demanded that an end should be put to this terrible war: the god of war opposes this, but is worsted. Eustathius says that this holds forth the opposition of rage and wisdom; and no sooner has our reason subdued one temptation, but another succeeds to reinforce it, as Venus succours Mars. The poet seems farther to insinuate, that reason when it resists a temptation vigorously, easily overcomes it: so it is with the utmost facility, that Pallas conquers both Mars and Venus. He adds, that Pallas retreated from Mars in order to conquer him: this shews us, that the best way to subdue a temptation is to retreat from it.

Then heav'd the Goddeſs in her mighty hand
A ſtone, the limit of the neighb'ring land,
There fix'd from eldeſt times; black, craggy, vaſt: 470
This, at the heav'nly homicide ſhe caſt.

ψ. 468. *Then heav'd the Goddeſs in her mighty hand
A ſtone, etc.]*

The poet has deſcribed many of his heroes in former parts of his poem, as throwing ſtones of enormous bulk and weight; but here he riſes in his image: he is deſcribing a goddeſs, and has found a way to make that action excel all human ſtrength, and be equal to a deity.

Virgil has imitated this paſſage in his twelfth book, and applied it to Turnus; but I cannot help thinking that the action in a mortal is ſomewhat extravagantly imagined: what principally renders it ſo, is an addition of two lines to this ſimile which he borrows from another part of Homer, only with this difference, that whereas Homer ſays no two men could raiſe ſuch a ſtone, Virgil extends it to twelve.

———*Saxum circumſpicit ingens,*

Saxum, antiquum, ingens, campo quod forte jacebat,

Limes agro poſitus, litam ut diſcerneret arvis.

(There is a beauty in the repetition of *saxum ingens*, in the ſecond line; it makes us dwell upon the image, and gives us leiſure to conſider the vaſtneſs of the ſtone:) the other two lines are as follow;

Vix illud, lecti bis ſex cervice ſubirent,

Qualia nunc hominum producit corpora tellus.

May I be allowed to think too, they are not ſo well introduced in Virgil? For it is juſt after Turnus is deſcribed as weakened and oppreſſed with fears and ill omens; it exceeds probability; and Turnus, methinks, looks more like a knight-errant in a romance, than a hero in an epic poem.

Thund'ring he falls; a mass of monstrous size,
And sev'n broad acres covers as he lies.

The stunning stroke his stubborn nerves unbound;
Loud o'er the fields his ringing arms resound: 475
The scornful dame her conquest views with smiles,
And glorying thus, the prostrate God reviles.

Hast thou not yet, insatiate fury! known
How far Minerva's force transcends thy own?
Juno, whom thou rebellious dar'st withstand, 480
Corrects thy folly thus by Pallas' hand;
Thus meets thy broken faith with just disgrace,
And partial aid to Troy's perfidious race.

The Goddess spoke, and turn'd her eyes away,
That beaming round, diffus'd celestial day. 485
Jove's Cyprian daughter, stooping on the land,
Lent to the wounded God her tender hand:
Slowly he rises, scarcely breathes with pain,
And propt on her fair arm, forsakes the plain.
This the bright empress of the heav'ns survey'd, 490
And scoffing, thus, to war's victorious maid.

Lo! what an aid on Mars's side is seen!
The Smiles and Loves unconquerable queen!
Mark with what insolence, in open view,
She moves: let Pallas, if she dares, pursue. 495

Minerva smiling heard, the pair o'ertook,
And slightly on her breast the wanton strook:
She, unresisting, fell; (her spirits fled)
On earth together lay the lovers spread.

And like these heroes, be the fate of all 500

(Minerva cries) who guard the Trojan wall!

To Grecian Gods such let the Phrygian be,

So dread, so fierce, as Venus is to me;

Then from the lowest stone shall Troy be mov'd—

Thus she, and Juno with a smile approv'd. 505

Meantime, to mix in more than mortal fight,

The God of Ocean dares the God of light.

ψ. 507. *The God of Ocean dares the God of light.*]

The interview between Neptune and Apollo is very judiciously in this place enlarged upon by our author. The poem now draws to a conclusion; the Trojans are to be punished for their perjury and violence: Homer accordingly with a poetical justice sums up the evidence against them, and represents the very founder of Troy as an injurious person. There have been several references to this story since the beginning of the poem, but he forbore to give it at large till near the end of it; that it might be fresh upon the memory, and shew, the Trojans deserve the punishment they are going to suffer.

Eustathius gives the reason why Apollo assists the Trojans, though he had been equally with Neptune affronted by Laomedon: this proceeded from the honours which Apollo received from the posterity of Laomedon; Troy paid him no less worship than Cilla, or Tenedos; and by these means won him over to a forgiveness: but Neptune still was slighted, and consequently continued an enemy to the whole race.

The same author gives us various opinions why Neptune is said to have built the Trojan wall, and to have been defrauded of his wages: Some say that Laomedon sacrilegiously took away the treasures out of the temples of Apollo and Neptune, to carry on the fortifications; from whence it was fabled that Neptune and Apollo built the walls. Others will have it, that two of the work-

What sloth has seiz'd us, when the fields around [sound?
 Ring with conflicting pow'rs, and heav'n returns the
 Shall ignominious we with shame retire, 510

No deed perform'd, to our Olympian fire?

Come, prove thy arm! for first the war to wage,

Suits not my greatness, or superior age.

Rash as thou art to prop the Trojan throne,

(Forgetful of my wrongs, and of thy own) 515

And guard the race of proud Laomedon!

men dedicated their wages to Apollo and Neptune; and that Laomedon detained them: so that he might in some sense be said to defraud the deities themselves, by withholding what was dedicated to their temples.

The reason why Apollo is said to have kept the herds of Laomedon, is not so clear. Eustathius observes that all plagues first seize upon the four-footed creation, and are supposed to arise from this deity: thus Apollo in the first book sends the plague into the Grecian army; the ancients therefore made him to preside over cattel, that by preserving them from the plague, mankind might be safe from infectious diseases. Others tell us, that this employment is ascribed to Apollo, because he signifies the sun: now the sun clothes the pastures with grass and herbs; so that Apollo may be said himself to feed the cattel, by supplying them with food. Upon either of these accounts Laomedon may be said to be ungrateful to that deity, for raising no temple to his honour.

It is observable that Homer, in this story, ascribes the building of the wall to Neptune only: I should conjecture the reason might be, that Troy being a sea-port town, the chief strength of it depended upon its situation, so that the sea was in a manner a wall to it: upon this account Neptune may not improbably be said to have built the wall.

Hast thou forgot, how at the monarch's pray'r,
 We shar'd the lengthen'd labours of a year!
 Troy walls I rais'd (for such were Jove's commands)
 And yon' proud bulwarks grew beneath my hands: 520
 Thy task it was to feed the bellowing droves
 Along fair Ida's vales, and pendent groves.
 But when the circling seasons in their train
 Brought back the grateful day that crown'd our pain;
 With menace stern the fraudulent king defy'd 525
 Our latent Godhead, and the prize deny'd:
 Mad as he was, he threaten'd servile bands,
 And doom'd us exiles far in barb'rous lands.
 Incens'd, we heav'nward fled with swiftest wing,
 And destin'd vengeance on the perjur'd king. 530
 Dost thou, for this, afford proud Ilium grace,
 And not like us, infest the faithless race?
 Like us, their present, future sons destroy,
 And from its deep foundations heave their Troy?
 Apollo thus: To combat for mankind 535
 Ill suits the wisdom of celestial mind:
 For what is man? calamitous by birth,
 They owe their life and nourishment to earth;

✱. 537. *For what is man?* etc.] The poet is very happy in interspersing his poem with moral sentences; in this place he steals away his reader from war and horror, and gives him a beautiful admonition of his own frailty. "Shall I (says Apollo) contend with thee for the sake of man? man, who is no more than a leaf of a tree, now green and flourishing, but soon withered away and gone?" The son of Sirach has an

Like yearly leaves, that now, with beauty crown'd,
Smile on the sun; now, wither on the ground: 540

To their own hands commit the frantic scene,
Nor mix immortals in a cause so mean.

Then turns his face, far-beaming heav'nly fires;
And from the senior pow'r, submits retires;

Him, thus retreating, Artemis upbraids, 545

The quiver'd huntress of the Sylvan shades.

And is it thus the youthful Phœbus flies,
And yields to Ocean's hoary sire, the prize?

How vain that martial pomp, and dreadful show
Of pointed arrows, and the silver bow! 550

Now boast no more in yon' celestial bow'r,

Thy force can match the great earth-shaking pow'r.

Silent, he heard the queen of woods upbraid:

Not so Saturnia bore the vaunting maid;

But furious thus. What insolence has driv'n 555

Thy pride to face the majesty of heav'n?

expression which very much resembles this, Ecclus. xiv. 18. *As the green leaves upon a thick tree, some fall, and some grow, so is the generation of flesh and blood, one cometh to an end, and one is born.*

ψ. 544. *And from the senior pow'r, submits retires.]*

Two things hinder Homer from making Neptune and Apollo fight. First, because having already described the fight between Vulcan and Xanthus, he has nothing farther to say here, for it is the same conflict between humidity and dryness. Secondly, Apollo being the same with Destiny, and the ruin of the Trojans being concluded upon and decided, that God can no longer defer it. Dacier.

What tho' by Jove the female plague design'd,
 Fierce to the feeble race of woman-kind,
 The wretched matron feels thy piercing dart;
 Thy sex's tyrant, with a tyger's heart? 560
 What tho' tremendous in the woodland chase,
 Thy certain arrows pierce the savage race?
 How dares thy rashness on the pow'rs divine
 Employ those arms, or match thy force with mine?
 Learn hence, no more unequal war to wage—— 565
 She said, and seiz'd her wrists with eager rage;

ψ. 557. *The female plague——*

Fierce to the feeble race of woman-kind etc.]

The words in the original are, *Though Jupiter has made you a lion to women*. The meaning of this is, that Diana was terrible to that sex, as being the same with the moon, and bringing on the pangs of child-birth: or else that the ancients attributed all sudden deaths of women to the darts of Diana, as of men to those of Apollo: which opinion is frequently alluded to in Homer. Eustathius.

ψ. 566. *She said, and seiz'd her wrists, etc.]* I must confess I am at a loss how to justify Homer in every point of these combats with the gods: when Diana and Juno are to fight, Juno calls her an *impudent bitch*, *αὐδαιστικὴ*: When they fight, she boxes her soundly, and sends her crying and trembling to heaven: as soon as she comes thither, Jupiter falls a laughing at her: indeed the rest of the deities seem to be in a merry vein during all the action: Pallas beats Mars and laughs at him; Jupiter sees them in the same merry mood: Juno when she had cuffed Diana is not more serious: in short, unless there be some depths that I am not able to fathom, Homer never better deserved than in this place the censure cast upon him by the ancients, that as he

These in her left hand lock'd, her right unty'd
 The bow, the quiver, and its plummy pride.
 About her temples flies the busy bow;
 Now here, now there, she winds her from the blow; 570
 The scatt'ring arrows rattling from the case,
 Drop round, and idly mark the dusty place.
 Swift from the field the baffled huntress flies,
 And scarce restrains the torrent in her eyes:
 So, when the falcon wings her way above, 575
 To the cleft cavern speeds the gentle dove,
 (Not fated yet to die) there safe retreats,
 Yet still her heart against the marble beats.

To her, Latona hastes with tender care;
 Whom Hermes viewing, thus declines the war. 580

raised the characters of his men up to gods, so he sunk
 those of gods, down to men.

Yet I think it but reasonable to conclude, from the
 very absurdity of all this, (supposing it had no hidden
 meaning or allegory) that there must therefore certainly
 be some. Nor do I think it any inference to the con-
 trary, that it is too obscure for us to find out: the re-
 moteness of our times must necessarily darken yet more
 and more such things as were mysteries at first. Not
 that it is at all impossible, notwithstanding their present
 darkness, but they might then have been very obvious;
 as it is certain, allegories ought to be disguised, but not
 obscured: an allegory should be like a veil over a
 beautiful face, so fine and transparent, as to shew the
 very charms it covers.

ψ. 580. Whom Hermes viewing, thus declines the war.]
 It is impossible that Mercury should encounter Latona:
 such a fiction would be unnatural, he being a planet, and

How shall I face the dame, who gives delight
 To him whose thunders blacken heav'n with night?
 Go, matchless Goddess! triumph in the skies,
 And boast my conquest, while I yield the prize.

He spoke; and past: Latona, stooping low, 585
 Collects the scatter'd shafts, and fallen bow,
 That glitt'ring on the dust, lay here and there;
 Dishonour'd relicks of Diana's war.

Then swift pursu'd her to her blest abode,
 Where, all confus'd, she sought the sov'reign God; 590
 Weeping she grasp'd his knees: the ambrosial vest
 Shook with her sighs, and panted on her breast.

The fire, superior smil'd; and bade her show
 What heav'nly hand had caus'd his daughter's woe?
 Abash'd, she names his own imperial spouse; 595
 And the pale crescent fades upon her brows.

Thus they above: while swiftly gliding down,
 Apollo enters Ilion's sacred town:
 The guardian God now trembled for her wall,
 And fear'd the Greeks, tho' fate forbade her fall. 600
 Back to Olympus, from the war's alarms,
 Return the shining bands of Gods in arms;
 Some proud in triumph, some with rage on fire;
 And take their thrones around th' æthereal fire:

Thro' blood, thro' death, Achilles still proceeds, 605
 O'er slaughter'd heroes, and o'er rolling steeds.

she representing the night; for the planets owe all their
 lustre to the shades of the night, and then only become
 visible to the world. Eustathius.

As when avenging flames with fury driv'n
 On guilty towns exert the wrath of heav'n;
 The pale inhabitants, some fall, some fly;
 And the red vapours purple all the sky. 610
 So rag'd Achilles: death and dire dismay,
 And toils, and terrors, fill'd the dreadful day.

High on a turret hoary Priam stands,
 And marks the waste of his destructive hands;

ψ. 607. *As when avenging flames with fury driv'n,
 On guilty towns exert the wrath of heav'n.*]

This passage may be explained two ways, each very remarkable. First, by taking this fire for a real fire, sent from heaven to punish a criminal city, of which we have example in holy writ. Hence we find that Homer had a notion of this great truth, that God sometimes exerts his judgments on whole cities in this signal and terrible manner. Or if we take it in the other sense, simply as a fire thrown into a town by the enemies who assault it, and only expressed thus by the author in the same manner as Jeremy makes the city of Jerusalem say, when the Chaldæans burnt the temple, *The Lord from above hath sent fire into my bones*, Lament. i. 13. Yet still thus much will appear understood by Homer, that the fire which is cast into a city comes not, properly speaking, from men, but from God, who delivers it up to their fury. Dacier.

ψ. 613. *High on a turret hoary Priam, etc.*] The poet still raises the idea of the courage and strength of his hero, by making Priam in a terror that he should enter the town after the routed troops: for if he had not surpassed all mortals, what could have been more desirable for an enemy, than to have let him in, and then destroyed him?

Here again there was need of another machine to hinder him from entering the city; for Achilles being
 vastly

Views, from his arm, the Trojans scatter'd flight, 615
And the near hero rising on his flight!

No stop, no check, no aid! with feeble pace,
And settled sorrow on his aged face,
Fast as he could, he fighting quits the walls;
And thus, descending on the guards he calls. 620

You to whose care our city-gates belong,
Set wide your portals to the flying throng.
For lo! he comes, with unresisted sway;
He comes, and desolation marks his way!
But when within the walls our troops take breath, 625
Lock fast the brazen bars, and shut out death.
Thus charg'd the rev'rend monarch: wide were flung
The opening folds; the sounding hinges rung.
Phœbus rush'd forth, the flying bands to meet;
Strook slaughter back, and cover'd the retreat. 630

vastly speedier than those he pursued, he must necessarily overtake some of them, and the narrow gates could not let in a body of troops, without his mingling with the hindmost. The story of Agenor is therefore admirably contrived, and Apollo, (who was to take care that the fatal decrees should be punctually executed) interposes both to save Agenor and Troy; for Achilles might have killed Agenor, and still entered with the troops, if Apollo had not diverted him by the pursuit of that phantom. Agenor opposed himself to Achilles only because he could not do better; for he sees himself reduced to a dilemma, either ingloriously to perish among the fugitives, or hide himself in the forest; both which were equally unsafe: therefore he is purposely inspired with a generous resolution to try to save his countrymen, and as the reward of that service, is at last saved himself.

On heaps the Trojans croud to gain the gate,
 And gladsome see their last escape from fate:
 Thither, all parch'd with thirst, a heartless train,
 Hoary with dust, they beat the hollow plain:
 And gasping, panting, fainting, labour on 635
 With heavier strides, that lengthen tow'rd the town.
 Enrag'd Achilles follows with his spear;
 Wild with revenge, insatiable of war.

Then had the Greeks eternal praise acquir'd,
 And Troy inglorious to her walls retir'd; 640
 But * he, the God who darts æthereal flame,
 Shot down to save her, and redeem her fame.
 To young Agenor force divine he gave,
 (Antenor's offspring, haughty, bold and brave)
 In aid of him, beside the beech he fate, 645
 And wrapt, in clouds, restrain'd the hand of fate.
 When now the gen'rous youth Achilles spies,
 Thick beats his heart, the troubled motions rise,
 (So, ere a storm, the waters heave and roll)
 He stops, and questions thus his mighty soul. 650

What, shall I fly this terror of the plain?
 Like others fly, and be like others slain?

* Apollo.

ψ. 651. *What, shall I fly? etc.*] This is a very beautiful soliloquy of Agenor, such a one as would naturally arise in the soul of a brave man, going upon a desperate enterprize: he weighs every thing in the balance of reason; he sets before himself the baseness of flight, and the courage of his enemy, until at last the thirst of glory preponderates all other considerations. From the con-

Vain hope! to shun him by the self-same road
 Yon' line of slaughter'd Trojans lately trod.
 No: with the common heap I scorn to fall— 655
 What if they pass'd me to the Trojan wall,
 While I decline to yonder path, that leads
 To Ida's forests and surrounding shades?
 So may I reach, conceal'd, the cooling flood,
 From my tir'd body wash the dirt and blood, 660
 As soon as night her dusky veil extends,
 Return in safety to my Trojan friends,
 What if?—But wherefore all this vain debate?
 Stand I to doubt, within the reach of fate?
 Ev'n now perhaps, ere yet I turn the wall, 665
 The fierce Achilles sees me, and I fall:
 Such is his swiftness, 'tis in vain to fly,
 And such his valour, that who stands must die.
 Howe'er 'tis better, fighting for the state,
 Here, and in public view, to meet my fate. 670
 Yet sure he too is mortal; he may feel
 (Like all the sons of earth) the force of steel;
 One only soul informs that dreadful frame;
 And Jove's sole favour gives him all his fame.
 He said, and stood, collected in his might; 675
 And all his beating bosom claim'd the fight.

clusion of this speech it is evident, that the story of
 Achilles's being invulnerable except in the heel, is an
 invention of latter ages; for had he been so, there had
 been nothing wonderful in his character. Eustathius.

So from some deep grown wood the panther starts,
 Rous'd from his thicket by a storm of darts :
 Untaught to fear or fly, he hears the sounds,
 Of shouting hunters, and of clam'rous hounds ; 680
 Tho' struck, tho' wounded, scarce perceives the pain,
 And the barb'd jav'lin stings his breast in vain :
 On their whole war, untam'd the savage flies ;
 And tears his hunter, or beneath him dies.
 Not less resolv'd, Antenor's valiant heir 685
 Confronts Achilles, and awaits the war,
 Disdainful of retreat : high-held before,
 His shield (a broad circumference) he bore ;
 Then graceful as he stood, in act to throw
 The lifted jav'lin, thus bespoke the foe. 690

How proud Achilles glories in his fame !
 And hopes this day to sink the Trojan name
 Beneath her ruins ! know, that hope is vain ;
 A thousand woes, a thousand toils remain.
 Parents and children our just arms employ, 695
 And strong, and many, are the sons of Troy.
 Great as thou art, ev'n thou may'st stain with gore
 These Phrygian fields, and press a foreign shore.

He said : with matchless force the jav'lin flung
 Smote on his knee ; the hollow cuishes rung 700
 Beneath the pointed steel ; but safe from harms
 He stands impassive in th' æthereal arms.
 Then fiercely rushing on the daring foe,
 His lifted arm prepares the fatal blow.

Book XXI. H O M E R's I L I A D. 113
 But jealous of his fame Apollo shrouds 705
 The God-like Trojan in a veil of clouds:
 Safe from pursuit, and shut from mortal view,
 Dismiss'd with fame, the favour'd youth withdrew.
 Meanwhile the God, to cover their escape,
 Assumes Agenor's habit, voice, and shape, 710
 Flies from the furious chief in this disguise,
 The furious chief still follows where he flies:
 Now o'er the fields they stretch with lengthen'd strides,
 Now urge the course where swift Scamander glides:
 The God now distant scarce a stride before, 715
 Tempts his pursuit, and wheels about the shore:

¶. 709. *Meanwhile the God, to cover their escape, etc.*] The poet makes a double use of this fiction of Apollo's deceiving Achilles in the shape of Agenor; by these means he draws him from the pursuit, and gives the Trojans time to enter the city, and at the same time brings Agenor handsomely off from the combat. The moral of this fable is, that destiny would not yet suffer Troy to fall.

Eustathius fancies that the occasion of the fiction might be this: Agenor fled from Achilles to the banks of Xanthus, and might there conceal himself from the pursuer behind some covert that grew on the shores; this perhaps might be the whole of the story. So plain a narration would have passed in the mouth of an historian, but the poet dresses it in fiction, and tells us that Apollo (or Destiny) concealed him in a cloud from the sight of his enemy.

The same author farther observes, that Achilles by an unseasonable piece of vain-glory, in pursuing a single enemy, gives time to a whole army to escape: he neither kills Agenor, nor overtakes the Trojans.

While all the flying troops their speed employ,
And pour on heaps into the walls of Troy.
No stop, no stay ; no thought to ask, or tell,
Who 'scap'd by flight, or who by battel fell. 720
'Twas tumult all, and violence of flight ;
And sudden joy confus'd, and mix'd affright :
Pale Troy against Achilles shuts her gate ;
And nations breathe, deliver'd from their fate.

T H E

I L I A D.

B O O K XXII.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The Death of Hector.

THE Trojans being safe within the walls, Hector only stays to oppose Achilles. Priam is struck at his approach, and tries to persuade his son to re-enter the town. Hecuba joins her intreaties, but in vain. Hector consults within himself what measures to take: but at the advance of Achilles, his resolution fails him, and he flies; Achilles pursues him thrice round the walls of Troy. The Gods debate concerning the fate of Hector; at length Minerva descends to the aid of Achilles. She deludes Hector in the shape of Deiphobus; he stands the combat, and is slain. Achilles drags the dead body at his chariot, in the sight of Priam and Hecuba. Their lamentations, tears and despair. Their cries reach the ears of Andromache, who, ignorant of this, was retired into the inner part of the palace: she mounts up to the walls, and beholds her dead husband. She swoons at the spectacle. Her excess of grief and lamentation.

The thirtieth day still continues. The scene lies under the walls, and on the battlements of Troy.

THUS to their bulwarks, smit with panic fear,
The herded Ilians rush like driven deer;

It is impossible but the whole attention of the reader must be awakened in this book: the heroes of the two

There safe, they wipe the briny drops away,
 And drown in bowls the labours of the day.
 Close to the walls advancing o'er the fields, 5
 Beneath one roof of well compacted shields,
 March, bending on, the Greeks embody'd pow'rs,
 Far-stretching in the shade of Trojan tow'rs.
 Great Hector singly stay'd; chain'd down by fate,
 There fixt he stood before the Scæan gate; 10
 Still his bold arms determin'd to employ,
 The guardian still of long-defended Troy.

Apollo now to tir'd Achilles turns;
 (The pow'r confest in all his glory burns)
 And what (he cries) has Peleus' son in view, 15
 With mortal speed a Godhead to pursue?
 For not to thee to know the Gods is giv'n,
 Unskill'd to trace the latent marks of heav'n.
 What boots thee now, that Troy forsook the plain?
 Vain thy past labour, and thy present vain: 20

armies are now to encounter; all the foregoing battels have been but so many preludes and under-actions, in order to this great event, wherein the whole fate of Greece and Troy is to be decided by the sword of Achilles and Hector.

This is the book, which of the whole Iliad appears to me the most charming. It assembles in it all that can be imagined of great and important on the one hand, and of tender and melancholy on the other: Terror and Pity are here wrought up in perfection; and if the reader is not sensible of both in a high degree, either he is utterly void of all taste, or the translator of all skill, in poetry.

Safe in their walls are now her troops bestow'd,
While here thy frantic rage attacks a God.

The chief incens'd——Too partial God of day !
To check my conquests in the middle way :
How few in Ithion else had refuge found ? 25
What gasping numbers now had bit the ground ?
Thou robb'st me of a glory justly mine,
Pow'rful of Godhead, and of fraud divine :
Mean fame, alas ! for one of heav'nly strain,
To cheat a mortal who repines in vain. 30

Then to the city terrible and strong,
With high and haughty steps he towr'd along.
So the proud courser, victor of the prize,
To the near goal with double ardour flies.
Him, as he blazing shot across the field, 35
The careful eyes of Priam first beheld.
Not half so dreadful rises to the sight
Thro' the thick gloom of some tempestuous night

ψ. 37. *Not half so dreadful rises, etc.*] With how much dreadful pomp is Achilles here introduced ! how noble, and in what bold colours hath he drawn the blazing of his arms, the rapidity of his advance, the terror of his appearance, the desolation round him ; but above all, the certain death attending all his motions and his very looks ; what a croud of terrible ideas in this one simile !

But immediately after this, follows the moving image of the two aged parents, trembling, weeping, and imploring their son : that is succeeded again by the dreadful gloomy picture of Hector, all on fire, obstinately bent on death, and expecting Achilles ; admirably painted in the simile of the snake rolled up in his den, and collect-

Orion's dog (the year when Autumn weighs)

And o'er the feebler stars exerts his rays; 40

Terrific glory ! for his burning breath

Taints the red air with fevers, plagues, and death.

So flam'd his fiery mail. Then wept the sage ;

He strikes his rev'rend head now white with age :

He lifts his wither'd arms ; obtests the skies ; 45

He calls his much-lov'd son with feeble cries ;

The son, resolv'd Achilles' force to dare,

Full at the Scæan gates expects the war :

While the sad father on the rampart stands,

And thus adjures him with extended hands. 50

Ah stay not, stay not ! guardless and alone ;

Hector ! my lov'd, my dearest bravest son !

ing his poisons : and indeed, through the whole book, this wonderful contrast, and opposition of the *moving* and of the *terrible*, is perpetually kept up, each heightening the other : I cannot find words to express how so great beauties affect me.

ψ. 51. *The speech of Priam to Hector.*] The poet has entertained us all along with various scenes of slaughter and horror : he now changes to the pathetic, and fills the mind of the reader with tender sorrows. Eustathius observes that Priam preludes to his words by actions expressive of misery : the unhappy orator introduces his speech to Hector with groans and tears, and rending his hoary hair. The father and the king plead with Hector to preserve his life and his country. He represents his own age, and the loss of many of his children ; and adds, that if Hector falls, he should then be inconsolable, and the empire of Troy at an end.

It is a piece of great judgment in Homer, to make the fall of Troy to depend upon the death of Hector :

Methinks already I behold thee slain,
 And stretch'd beneath that fury of the plain.
 Implacable Achilles! might'st thou be
 To all the Gods no dearer than to me! 55
 Thee, vultures wild should scatter round the shore,
 And bloody dogs grow fiercer from thy gore.
 How many valiant sons I late enjoy'd,
 Valiant in vain! by thy curst arm destroy'd: 60
 Or, worse than slaughter'd, sold in distant isles
 To shameful bondage and unworthy toils.
 Two, while I speak, my eyes in vain explore,
 Two from one mother sprung, my Polydore,
 And lov'd Lycaon; now perhaps no more! } 65
 Oh! if in yonder hostile camp they live,
 What heaps of gold, what treasures would I give?
 (Their grandfire's wealth, by right of birth their own,
 Consign'd his daughter with Lelegia's throne)
 But if (which heav'n forbid) already lost, 70
 All pale they wander on the Stygian coast;
 What sorrows then must their sad mother know,
 What anguish I? unutterable woe!
 Yet less that anguish, less to her, to me,
 Less to all Troy, if not depriv'd of thee. 75

the poet does not openly tell us, that Troy was taken by the Greeks; but that the reader might not be unacquainted with what happened after the period of his poem, he gives us to understand in this speech, that the city was taken, and that Priam, his wives, his sons, and daughters, were either killed or made slaves.

Yet shun Achilles! enter yet the wall;
 And spare thy self, thy father, spare us all!
 Save thy dear life; or if a soul so brave
 Neglect that thought, thy dearer glory save.
 Pity, while yet I live, these silver hairs; 80
 While yet thy father feels the woes he bears,
 Yet curst with sense! a wretch, whom in his rage
 (All trembling on the verge of helpless age)
 Great Jove has plac'd, sad spectacle of pain!
 The bitter dregs of fortune's cup to drain: 85
 To fill with scenes of death his closing eyes,
 And number all his days by miseries!
 My heroes slain, my bridal bed o'erturn'd,
 My daughters ravish'd, and my city burn'd,
 My bleeding infants dash'd against the floor; 90
 These I have yet to see, perhaps yet more!

ψ. 76. *Enter yet the wall, And spare, etc.*] The argument that Priam uses (says Eustathius) to induce Hector to secure himself in Troy is remarkable: he draws it not from Hector's fears, nor does he tell him that he is to save his own life: but he insists upon stronger motives: he tells him he may preserve his fellow-citizens, his country, and his father; and farther persuades him not to add glory to his mortal enemy by his fall.

ψ. 90. *My bleeding infants dash'd against the floor.*] Cruelties which the Barbarians usually exercised in the sacking of towns. Thus Isaiah foretells to Babylon that her children shall be dashed in pieces before her eyes by the Medes. *Infantes eorum allidentur in oculis eorum*, xii. 16. And David says to the same city, *happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.*

Perhaps ev'n I, reserv'd by angry fate
 The last sad relick of my ruin'd state,
 (Dire pomp of sov'reign wretchedness!) must fall,
 And stain the pavement of my regal hall; 95
 Where famish'd dogs, late guardians of my door,
 Shall lick their mangled master's spatter'd gore.
 Yet for my sons I thank ye Gods! 'twas well;
 Well have they perish'd, for in fight they fell.
 Who dies in youth, and vigour, dies the best, 100
 Struck thro' with wounds, all honest on the breast.
 But when the fates, in fulness of their rage,
 Spurn the hoar head of unresisting age,
 In dust the rev'rend lineaments deform,
 And pour to dogs the life-blood scarcely warm! 105
 This, this is misery! the last, the worst,
 That man can feel; man, fated to be curs'd!

stones. Psal. cxxxvii. 9. And in the prophet Hosea, xiii. 16. *Their infants shall be dashed in pieces.* Dacier.
 y. 102. *But when the fates, etc.*] Nothing can be more moving than the image which Homer gives here, in comparing the different effects produced by the view of a young man, and that of an old one, both bleeding, and extended on the dust. The old man, it is certain, touches us most, and several reasons may be given for it; the principal is, that the young man defended himself, and his death is glorious; whereas an old man has no defence but his weakness, prayers and tears. They must be very insensible of what is dreadful, and have no taste in poetry, who omit this passage in a translation, and substitute things of a trivial and insipid nature. Dacier.

He said, and acting what no words could say,
Rent from his head the silver locks away.

With him the mournful mother bears a part; 110
Yet all their sorrows turn not Hector's heart:
The zone unbrac'd, her bosom she display'd;
And thus, fast-falling the salt tears, she said.

Have mercy on me, O my son! revere
The words of age; attend a parent's pray'r! 115
If ever thee in these fond arms I prest,
Or still'd thy infant clamours at this breast;

ψ. 114. *The speech of Hecuba.*] The speech of Hecuba opens with as much tenderness as that of Priam: the circumstance in particular of her shewing that breast to her son which had sustained his infancy, is highly moving: it is a silent kind of oratory, and prepares the heart to listen, by prepossessing the eye in favour of the speaker.

Eustathius takes notice of the difference between the speeches of Priam and Hecuba: Priam dissuades him from the combate, by enumerating not only the loss of his own family, but of his whole country: Hecuba dwells entirely upon his single death; this is a great beauty in the poet, to make Priam a father to his whole country; but to describe the fondness of the mother as prevailing over all other considerations, and to mention that only which chiefly affects her.

This puts me in mind of a judicious stroke in Milton, with regard to the several characters of Adam and Eve. When the angel is driving them both out of paradise, Adam grieves that he must leave a place where he had conversed with God and his angels; but Eve laments that she shall never more behold the flowers of Eden. Here Adam mourns like a man, and Eve like a woman.

Ah do not thus our helpless years forego,
 But by our walls secur'd, repel the foe.
 Against his rage if singly thou proceed, 120
 Should'st thou (but heav'n avert it!) should'st thou bleed,
 Nor must thy corps lie honour'd on the bier,
 Nor spouse, nor mother, grace thee with a tear;
 Far from our pious rites, those dear remains
 Must feast the vultures on the naked plains. 125

So they, while down their cheeks the torrents roll;
 But fix'd remains the purpose of his soul:
 Resolv'd he stands, and with a fiery glance
 Expects the hero's terrible advance.
 So roll'd up in his den, the swelling snake 130
 Beholds the traveller approach the brake;
 When fed with noxious herbs his turgid veins
 Have gather'd half the poisons of the plains;
 He burns, he stiffens with collected ire,
 And his red eye-balls glare with living fire. 135
 Beneath a turret, on his shield reclin'd,
 He stood, and question'd thus his mighty mind.

Where lies my way? to enter in the wall?
 Honour and shame th' ungen'rous thought recall:

ψ. 138. *The Soliloquy of Hector.*] There is much greatness in the sentiments of this whole soliloquy. Hector prefers death to an ignominious life: he knows how to die with glory, but not how to live with dishonour. The reproach of Polydamas affects him; the scandals of the meanest people have an influence on his thoughts.

It is remarkable that he does not say, he fears the insults of the braver Trojans, but of the most worthless

Shall proud Polydamas before the gate 140
Proclaim, his counsels are obey'd too late,

only. Men of merit are always the most candid; but others are ever for bringing all men to a level with themselves. They cannot bear that any one should be so bold as to excel, and are ready to pull him down to them, upon the least miscarriage. This sentiment is perfectly fine, and agreeable to the way of thinking, natural to a great and sensible mind.

There is a very beautiful break in the middle of this speech. Hector's mind fluctuates every way, he is calling a council in his own breast, and consulting what method to pursue: he doubts if he should not propose terms of peace to Achilles, and grants him very large concessions; but of a sudden he checks himself, and leaves the sentence unfinished. The paragraph runs thus; "If, says Hector, I should offer him the largest conditions, give all that Troy contains"—There he stops, and immediately subjoins, "But why do I delude myself, *etc.*"

It is evident from this speech, that the power of making peace was in Hector's hands: for unless Priam had transferred it to him, he could not have made these propositions. So that it was Hector who broke the treaty in the third book (where the very same conditions were proposed by Agamemnon.) It is Hector therefore that is guilty, he is blameable in continuing the war, and involving the Greeks and Trojans in blood. This conduct in Homer was necessary; he observes a poetical justice, and shews that Hector is a criminal, before he brings him to death. Eustathius.

¶. 140. *Shall proud Polydamas, etc.*] Hector alludes to the counsel given him by Polydamas in the eighteenth book, which he then neglected to follow: it was, to withdraw to the city, and fortify themselves there, before Achilles returned to the battle.

Which timely follow'd but the former night,
 What numbers had been sav'd by Hector's flight?
 That wise advice rejected with disdain,
 I feel my folly in my people slain. 145
 Methinks my suff'ring country's voice I hear,
 But most, her worthless sons insult my ear,
 On my rash courage charge the chance of war,
 And blame those virtues which they cannot share.
 No——if I e'er return, return I must 150
 Glorious, my country's terror laid in dust:
 Or if I perish, let her see me fall
 In field at least, and fighting for her wall.
 And yet suppose these measures I forego,
 Approach unarm'd, and parley with the foe, 155
 The warrior-shield, the helm, and lance lay down,
 And treat on terms of peace to save the town:
 The wife with-held, the treasure ill-detain'd,
 (Cause of the war, and grievance of the land)
 With honourable justice to restore; 160
 And add half Ilion's yet remaining store,
 Which Troy shall, sworn, produce; that injur'd Greece
 May share our wealth, and leave our walls in peace.
 But why this thought? unarm'd if I should go, }
 What hope of mercy from this vengeful foe, } 165
 But woman-like to fall, and fall without a blow? }

We greet not here, as man conversing man,
Met at an oak, or journeying o'er a plain :

ψ. 167. *We greet not here, as man conversing man,*

Met at an oak, or journeying o'er a plain, etc.]

The words literally are these, “ *There is no talking with Achilles, ἀπὸ δρυὸς ἢ δ’ ἀπὸ πέτρης, from an oak, or from a rock, [or about an oak or a rock] as a young man and a maiden talk together.* It is thought an obscure passage, though I confess I am either too fond of my own explication in the above cited verses, or they make it a very clear one. “ *There is no conversing with this* “ *implacable enemy in the rage of battel; as when* “ *sauntering people talk at leisure to one another on the* “ *road, or when young men and women meet in a* “ *field.*” I think the exposition of Eustathius more far-fetched, though it be ingenious; and therefore I must do him the justice not to suppress it. It was a common practice, says he, with the heathens, to expose such children as they either could not, or would not educate: the places where they deposited them, were usually in the cavities of *rocks*, or the hollow of *oaks*: these children being frequently found and preserved by strangers, were said to be the offspring of those oaks, or rocks where they were found. This gave occasion to the poets to feign that men were born of *oaks*, and there was a famous fable too of Deucalion and Pyrrha’s repairing mankind by casting *stones* behind them: it grew at last into a proverb, to signify idle tales; so that in the present passage it imports, that Achilles *will not listen to such idle tales as may pass with silly maids and fond lovers.* For fables and stories (and particularly such stories as the preservation, strange fortune, and adventures of exposed children) are the usual conversation of young men and maidens. Eustathius’s explanation may be corroborated by a parallel place in the *Odyssey*; where the poet says,

No season now for calm familiar talk,
 Like youths and maidens in an ev'ning walk : 170
 War is our business, but to whom is giv'n
 To die, or triumph, that, determine heav'n !

Thus pond'ring, like a God the Greek drew nigh ;
 His dreadful plumage nodded from on high ;
 The Pelian jav'lin, in his better hand, 175
 Shot trembling rays that glitter'd o'er the land ;
 And on his breast the beamy splendours shone
 Like Jove's own light'ning, or the rising sun.
 As Hector sees, unusual terrors rise,
 Struck by some God, he fears, recedes, and flies. 180

Οὐ γὰρ ἀπὸ δρυὸς ἔσσι παλαιάτῃ, ἔδ' ἀπὸ πέτρης.

The meaning of which passage is plainly this, *Tell me of what race you are, for undoubtedly you had a father and mother ; you are not, according to the old story, descended from an oak or a rock.* Where the word παλαιάτῃ shews that this was become an ancient proverb even in Homer's days.

ψ. 180. *Struck by some God, he fears, recedes, and flies.*] I doubt not most readers are shocked at the flight of Hector : it is indeed a high exaltation of Achilles (who was the poet's chief hero) that so brave a man as Hector durst not stand him. While Achilles was at a distance he had fortified his heart with noble resolutions, but at his approach they all vanish, and he flies. This (as exceptionable as some may think it) may yet be allowed to be a true portrait of human nature ; for distance, as it lessens all objects, so it does our fears : but where inevitable danger approaches, the stoutest hearts will feel some apprehensions at certain fate. It was the saying of one of the bravest men in this age, to one who told him he feared nothing, *Shew me but a certain dan-*

He leaves the gates, he leaves the walls behind;
Achilles follows like the winged wind.

ger, and I shall be as much afraid as any of you. I do not absolutely pretend to justify this passage in every point, but only to have thus much granted me, that Hector was in this desperate circumstance.

First, It will not be found in the whole Iliad, that Hector ever thought himself a match for Achilles. Homer (to keep this in our minds) had just now made Priam tell him, as a thing known (for certainly Priam would not insult him at that time) that there was no comparison between his own strength, and that of his antagonist:

-----ἔπειθ' πολὺ φέρτερός ἐστιν.

Secondly, We may observe with Dacier, the degrees by which Homer prepares this incident. In the 18th book the mere sight and voice of Achilles unarmed, has terrified and put the whole Trojan army into disorder. In the 19th the very sound of the celestial arms given him by Vulcan, has affrighted his own Myrmidons as they stand about him. In the 20th, he has been upon the point of killing Æneas, and Hector himself was not saved from him but by Apollo's interposing. In that and the following book, he makes an incredible slaughter of all that oppose him, he overtakes most of those that fly from him, and Priam himself opens the gates of Troy to receive the rest.

Thirdly, Hector stays, not that he hopes to overcome Achilles, but because shame and the dread of reproach forbid him to re-enter the city; a shame (says Eustathius) which was a fault that betrayed him out of his life, and ruined his country. Nay, Homer adds farther, that he only stayed by the immediate *will of heaven*, intoxicated and irresistibly bound down by *fate*.

Ἑκτορα δ' αὐτὸ μέναι ὀλοῦ μοῖρ' ἐπέδησεν.

Thus at the panting dove a falcon flies,
(The swiftest racer of the liquid skies)

Fourthly, He had just been reflecting on the injustice of the war he maintained; his spirits are depressed by heaven, he expects certain death, he perceives himself abandoned by the Gods, (as he directly says in ψ . 300, etc. of the Greek, and 385. of the translation) so that he might say to Achilles what Turnus does to Æneas,

Dii me terrent, et Jupiter hostis.

This indeed is the strongest reason that can be offered for the flight of Hector. He flies not from Achilles as a mortal hero, but from one whom he sees clad in impenetrable armour, seconded by Minerva, and one who had put to flight the inferior Gods themselves. This is not cowardice, according to the constant principles of Homer, who thought it no part of a hero's character to be impious, or to fancy himself independent on the supreme being.

Indeed it had been a grievous fault, had our author suffered the courage of Hector intirely to forsake him even in this extremity: a brave man's soul is still capable of rousing itself, and acting honourably in the last struggles. Accordingly Hector, though delivered over to his destiny, abandoned by the gods, and certain of death, yet stops and attacks Achilles; when he loses his spear, he draws his sword: it was impossible he should conquer, it was only in his power to fall gloriously; this he did, and it was all that man could do.

If the reader, after all, cannot bring himself to like this passage, for his own particular; yet to induce him to suspend his absolute censure, he may consider that Virgil had an uncommon esteem for it, as he has testified in transferring it almost intirely to the death of Turnus; where there was no necessity of making use of the like incidents; but doubtless he was touched with

Just when he holds or thinks he holds his prey, 185
 Obliquely wheeling thro' th' aerial way;
 With open beak and shrilling cries he springs,
 And aims his claws, and shoots upon his wings :

this episode, as with one of those which interest us most of the whole Iliad, by a spectacle at once so terrible, and so deplorable. I must also add the suffrage of Aristotle, who was so far from looking upon this passage as ridiculous or blameable, that he esteemed it marvellous and admirable. " The *wonderful*, says he, ought to have " place in tragedy, but still more in epic poetry, which " proceeds in this point even to the unreasonable: for " as in epic poems one sees not the persons acting, so " whatever passes the bounds of reason is proper to produce the admirable and the marvellous. For example, what Homer says of Hector pursued by Achilles, " would appear ridiculous on the stage; for the spectators could not forbear laughing to see on one side the " Greeks standing without any motion, and on the other Achilles pursuing Hector, and making signs to " the troops not to dart at him. But all this does not " appear when we read the poem: for what is wonderful is always agreeable, and as a proof of it, we find " that they who relate any thing, usually add something " to the truth, that it may the better please those who " hear it."

The same great critic vindicates this passage in the chapter following. " A poet, says he, is inexcusable " if he introduces such things as are impossible according to the rules of poetry: but this ceases to be a " fault, if by those means he attains to the end proposed; for he has then brought about what he intended: for example, if he renders by it any part of his " poem more astonishing or admirable. Such is the " place in the Iliad, where Achilles pursues Hector." Arist. poet. chap. 25, 26.

No less fore-right the rapid chace they held,
 One urg'd by fury, one by fear impell'd; 190
 Now circling round the walls their course maintain,
 Where the high watch-tow'r overlooks the plain;
 Now where the fig-trees spread their umbrage broad,
 (A wider compass) smoke along the road.
 Next by Scamander's double source they bound, 195
 Where two fam'd fountains burst the parted ground;

ψ. 196. *Where two fam'd fountains.*] Strabo blames Homer for saying that one of the sources of Scamander was a warm fountain; whereas (says he) there is but one spring, and that cold, neither is this in the place where Homer fixes it, but in the mountain. It is observed by Eustathius, that though this was not true in Strabo's days, yet it might in Homer's, greater changes having happened in less time than that which passed between those two authors, Sandys, who was both a geographer and critic of great accuracy, as well as a traveller of great veracity, affirms as an eye-witness, that there are yet some hot-water springs in that part of the country, opposite to Tenedos. I cannot but think that gentleman must have been particularly diligent and curious in his inquiries into the remains of a place so celebrated in poetry; as he was not only perhaps the most learned, but one of the best poets of his time: I am glad of this occasion to do his memory so much justice as to say, the English versification owes much of its improvement to his translations, and especially that admirable one of Job. What chiefly pleases me in this place, is to see the exact landskip of old Troy; we have a clear idea of the town itself, and of the roads and country about it; the river, the fig-trees, and every part is set before our eyes.

This hot thro' scorching clefts is seen to rise,
 With exhalations steaming to the skies;
 That the green banks in summer's heat o'erflows,
 Like crystal clear, and cold as winter-snows. 200
 Each gushing fount a marble cistern fills,
 Whose polish'd bed receives the falling rills;
 Where Trojan dames (ere yet alarm'd by Greece)
 Wash'd their fair garments in the days of peace.
 By these they pass, one chafing, one in flight, 205
 (The mighty fled, pursu'd by stronger might)
 Swift was the course; no vulgar prize they play,
 No vulgar victim must reward the day,
 (Such as in races crown the speedy strife)
 The prize contended was great Hector's life. 210

As when some hero's fun'rals are decreed
 In grateful honour of the mighty dead;
 Where high rewards the vig'rous youth inflame,
 (Some golden tripod, or some lovely dame)
 The panting coursers swiftly turn the goal, 215
 And with them turns the rais'd spectator's soul.
 Thus three times round the Trojan wall they fly;
 The gazing Gods lean forward from the sky:

v. 218. *The gazing Gods lean forward from the sky.*]
 We have here an instance of the great judgment of
 Homer. The death of Hector being the chief action of
 the poem; he assembles the gods, and calls a council in
 heaven concerning it: it is for the same reason that he
 represents Jupiter with the greatest solemnity weighing
 in his scales the fates of the two heroes: I have before
 observed

To whom, while eager on the chace they look,
The fire of mortals and immortals spoke. 220

Unworthy sight! the man, belov'd of heav'n,
Behold, inglorious round yon' city driv'n!
My heart partakes the gen'rous Hector's pain;
Hector, whose zeal whole hecatombs has slain,
Whose grateful fumes the Gods receiv'd with joy, 225
From Ida's summits, and the tow'rs of Troy:
Now see him flying! to his fears resign'd,
And fate, and fierce Achilles, close behind.
Consult, ye pow'rs! ('tis worthy your debate)
Whether to snatch him from impending fate, 230

observed at large upon the last circumstance in a preceding note, so that there is no occasion to repeat it.

I wonder that none of the commentators have taken notice of this beauty; in my opinion, it is a very necessary observation, and shews the art and judgment of the poet, that he has made the greatest and finishing action of the poem of such importance that it engages the gods in debates.

¶. 226. *From Ida's summits*—] It was the custom of the Pagans to sacrifice to the gods upon the hills and mountains, in scripture language upon the *high places*, for they were persuaded that the gods in a particular manner inhabited such eminences: wherefore God ordered his people to destroy all those high places, which the nations had prophaned by their idolatry. *You shall utterly destroy all the places wherein the nations which you shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree.* Deut. xii. 2. It is for this reason that so many kings are reproached in scripture for not *taking away the high places*. Dacier.

Or let him bear, by stern Pelides slain,
(Good as he is) the lot impos'd on man?

Then Pallas thus: shall he whose vengeance forms
The forky bolt, and blackens heav'n with storms,
Shall he prolong one Trojan's forfeit breath! 235

A man, a mortal, pre-ordain'd to death!
And will no murmurs fill the courts above?
No Gods indignant blame their partial Jove?

Go then (return'd the fire) without delay,
Exert thy will: I give the fates their way. 240
Swift at the mandate pleas'd Tritonia flies,
And stoops impetuous from the cleaving skies.

As thro' the forest, o'er the vale and lawn
The well-breath'd beagle drives the flying fawn;
In vain he tries the covert of the brakes, 245
Or deep beneath the trembling thicket shakes;
Sure of the vapour in the tainted dews,
The certain hound his various maze pursues.
Thus step by step, where'er the Trojan wheel'd,
There swift Achilles compass'd round the field. 250

ψ. 249. *Thus step by step, etc.*] There is some difficulty in this passage, and it seems strange that Achilles could not overtake Hector whom he excelled so much in swiftness, especially when the poet describes him as running in a narrower circle than Hector. Eustathius gives us many solutions from the ancients; Homer has already told us that they run for the life of Hector; and consequently Hector would exert his utmost speed, whereas Achilles might only endeavour to keep him from entering the city: besides, Achilles could not directly pursue him, because he frequently made efforts to

Oft' as to reach the Dardan gates he bends,
 And hopes th' assistance of his pitying friends,
 (Whose show'ring arrows, as he cours'd below,
 From the high turrets might oppress the foe)
 So oft' Achilles turns him to the plain: 255
 He eyes the city, but he eyes in vain.
 As men in slumbers seem with speedy pace
 One to pursue, and one to lead the chace,
 Their sinking limbs the fancy'd course forsake,
 Nor this can fly, nor that can overtake. 260

shelter himself under the wall, and he being obliged to turn him from it, he might be forced to take more steps than Hector. But the poet, to take away all grounds of an objection, tells us afterwards, that Apollo gave him a supernatural swiftness.

ψ. 257. *As men in slumbers.*] This beautiful comparison has been condemned by some of the ancients, even so far as to judge it unworthy of having a place in the Iliad: they say the diction is mean, and the similitude itself absurd, because it compares the swiftness of the heroes to men asleep, who are in a state of rest and inactivity. But there cannot be a more groundless criticism: the poet is so far from drawing his comparison from the repose of men asleep, that he alludes only to their dreams: it is a race in fancy that he describes; and surely the imagination is nimble enough to illustrate the greatest degree of swiftness: besides the verses themselves run with the utmost rapidity, and imitate the swiftness they describe. Eustathius.

What sufficiently proves these verses to be genuine, is, that Virgil has imitated them, *Æn.* 12.

Ac veluti in somnis————

No less the lab'ring heroes pant and strain;
While that but flies, and this pursues in vain.

What God, O muse! assisted Hector's force,
With fate itself so long to hold the course?
Phœbus it was; who, in his latest hour, 265
Endu'd his knees with strength, his nerves with pow'r:
And great Achilles, lest some Greek's advance
Should snatch the glory from his lifted lance,
Sign'd to the troops, to yield his foe the way,
And leave untouch'd the honours of the day. 270

ψ. 269. *Sign'd to the troops, etc.*] The difference which Homer here makes between Hector and Achilles deserves to be taken notice of; Hector is running away towards the walls, to the end that the Trojans who are upon them may overwhelm Achilles with their darts; and Achilles in turning Hector towards the plain, makes a sign to his troops not to attack him. This shews the great courage of Achilles. Yet this action which appears so generous has been very much condemned by the ancients; Plutarch in the life of Pompey gives us to understand, that it was looked upon as the action of a fool too greedy of glory: indeed this is not a single combat of Achilles against Hector, (for in that case Achilles would have done very ill not to hinder his troops from assaulting him) this was a rencounter in a battel, and so Achilles might, and ought to take all advantages to rid himself, the readiest and the surest way, of an enemy whose death would procure an entire victory to his party. Wherefore does he leave this victory to chance? Why expose himself to the hazard of losing it? Why does he prefer his private glory to the public weal, and the safety of all the Greeks, which he puts to the venture by delaying to conquer, and endangering his own person? I grant it is a fault, but it

Jove lifts the golden balances, that show
 The fates of mortal men, and things below:
 Here each contending hero's lot he tries,
 And weighs, with equal hand, their destinies.
 Low sinks the scale surcharg'd with Hector's fate; 275
 Heavy with death it sinks, and hell receives the weight.

Then Phœbus left him. Fierce Minerva flies
 To stern Pelides, and triumphing, cries:
 Oh lov'd of Jove! this day our labours cease,
 And conquest blazes with full beams on Greece. 280
 Great Hector falls; that Hector fam'd so far,
 Drunk with renown, insatiable of war,
 Falls by thy hand, and mine! not force, nor flight
 Shall more avail him, nor his God of light.

must be owned to be the fault of a hero. Eustathius.
 Dacier.

ψ. 277. *Then Phœbus left him*——] This is a very beautiful and poetical manner of describing a plain circumstance: the hour of Hector's death was now come, and the poet expresses it by saying that Apollo, or Destiny, forsakes him: that is, the fates no longer protect him. Eustathius.

ψ. II.——*Fierce Minerva flies To stern Pelides, etc.*] The poet may seem to diminish the glory of Achilles, by ascribing the victory over Hector to the assistance of Pallas; whereas in truth he fell by the hand only of Achilles: but poetry loves to raise every thing into a wonder; it steps out of the common road of narration, and aims to surprize; and the poet would farther insinuate that it is a greater glory to Achilles to be beloved by the gods, than to be only excellent in valour: for many men have valour, but few the favour of heaven. Eustathius.

See, where in vain he supplicates above, 285

Roll'd at the feet of unrelenting Jove!

Rest here: my self will lead the Trojan on,

And urge to meet the fate he cannot shun.

Her voice divine the chief with joyful mind

Obey'd; and rested, on his lance reclin'd. 290

While like Deiphobus the martial dame

(Her face, her gesture, and her arms the same)

In show an aid, by hapless Hector's side

Approach'd, and greets him thus with voice bely'd.

'Too long, O Hector! have I born the fight 295

Of this distress, and sorrow'd in thy flight;

It fits us now a noble stand to make,

And here, as brothers, equal fates partake.

'Then he. O prince! ally'd in blood and fame,

Dearer than all that own a brother's name; 300

Of all that Hecuba to Priam bore,

Long try'd, long lov'd; much lov'd, but honour'd more!

ψ. 290. *Obey'd; and rested.*] The whole passage where Pallas deceives Hector is evidently an allegory: Achilles perceiving that he cannot overtake Hector, pretends to be quite spent and wearied in the pursuit; the stratagem takes effect, and recalls his enemy: this the poet expresses by saying that Pallas, or Wisdom, came to assist Achilles. Hector observing his enemy stay to rest, concludes that he is quite fatigued, and immediately takes courage, and advances upon him; he thinks he has him at an advantage, but at last finds himself deceived: thus making a wrong judgment, he is betrayed into his death; so that his own *false judgment* is the *treacherous* Pallas that deceives him. Eustathius.

Since you of all our num'rous race, alone
Defend my life, regardless of your own.

Again the Goddess. Much my father's pray'r, 305
And much my mother's, prest me to forbear :
My friends embrac'd my knees, adjur'd my stay,
But stronger love impell'd, and I obey.
Come then, the glorious conflict let us try,
Let the steel sparkle, and the jav'lin fly; 310
Or let us stretch Achilles on the field,
Or to his arm our bloody trophies yield.

Fraudful she said; then swiftly march'd before;
The Dardan hero shuns his foe no more.
Sternly they met. The silence Hector broke; 315
His dreadful plumage nodded as he spoke.

Enough, O son of Peleus! Troy has view'd
Her walls thrice circled, and her chief pursu'd.

ψ. 317. *The speeches of Hector and of Achilles.*] There is an opposition between these speeches excellently adapted to the characters of both the heroes: that of Hector is full of courage, but mixt with humanity: that of Achilles, of resentment and arrogance: we see the great Hector disposing of his own remains, and that thirst of glory which has made him live with honour, now bids him provide, as Eustathius observes, that what once was Hector may not be dishonoured: thus we see a sedate, calm courage, with a contempt of death, in the speeches of Hector. But in that of Achilles there is a *fierte*, and an insolent air of superiority; his magnanimity makes him scorn to steal a victory, he bids him prepare to defend himself with all his forces: and that valour and resentment which made him desirous that he might revenge himself upon Hector with his own hand,

But now some God within me bids me try

Thine, or my fate: I kill thee, or I die.

320

Yet on the verge of battel let us stay,

And for a moment's space suspend the day;

Let heav'n's high pow'rs be call'd to arbitrate

The just conditions of this stern debate,

(Eternal witnesses of all below,

325

And faithful guardians of the treasur'd vow!)

To them I swear; if victor in the strife,

Jove by these hands shall shed thy noble life,

No vile dishonour shall thy corps pursue;

Stript of its arms alone (the conqu'ror's due)

330

The rest to Greece uninjur'd I'll restore:

Now plight thy mutual oath, I ask no more.

Talk not of oaths (the dreadful chief replies,

While anger flash'd from his disdainful eyes)

Detested as thou art, and ought to be,

335

Nor oath nor pact Achilles plights with thee:

and forbade the Greeks to interpose, now directs him not to take any advantage over a brave enemy. I think both their characters are admirably sustained, and though Achilles be drawn with a great violence of features, yet the picture is undoubtedly like him; and it had been the utmost absurdity to have softened one line upon this occasion, when the soul of Achilles was all on fire to revenge the death of his friend Patroclus. I must desire the reader to carry this observation in his memory, and particularly in that place, where Achilles says he could eat the very flesh of Hector; (though I have a little softened it in the translation,) *ψ*. 438.

Such pacts, as lambs and rabid wolves combine,
 Such leagues, as men and furious lions join,
 To such I call the Gods ! one constant state
 Of lasting rancour and eternal hate: 340

No thought but rage, and never-ceasing strife,
 'Till death extinguish rage, and thought, and life.
 Rouze then thy forces this important hour,
 Collect thy soul, and call forth all thy pow'r.
 No farther subterfuge, no farther chance; 345
 'Tis Pallas, Pallas gives thee to my lance.

Each Grecian ghost by thee depriv'd of breath,
 Now hovers round, and calls thee to thy death.
 He spoke, and lanc'd his jav'lin at the foe;
 But Hector shun'd the meditated blow: 350
 He stoop'd, while o'er his head the flying spear
 Sung innocent, and spent its force in air.
 Minerva watch'd it falling on the land,
 Then drew, and gave to great Achilles' hand,
 Unseen of Hector, who, elate with joy, 355
 Now shakes his lance, and braves the dread of Troy.

The life you boasted to that jav'lin giv'n,
 Prince ! you have mist. My fate depends on heav'n.
 To thee (presumptuous as thou art) unknown,
 Or what must prove my fortune, or thy own. 360
 Boasting is but an art, our fears to blind,
 And with false terrors sink another's mind.
 But know, whatever fate I am to try,
 By no dishonest wound shall Hector die;

I shall not fall a fugitive at least, 365

My soul shall bravely issue from my breast.

But first, try thou my arm; and may this dart

End all my country's woes, deep buried in thy heart!

The weapon flew, its course unerring held;

Unerring, but the heav'nly shield repell'd 370

The mortal dart; resulting with a bound

From off the ringing orb, it struck the ground.

Hector beheld his jav'lin fall in vain,

Nor other lance, nor other hope remain;

He calls Deiphobus, demands a spear, 375

In vain, for no Deiphobus was there.

All comfortless he stands: then, with a sigh,

'Tis so—heav'n wills it, and my hour is nigh!

I deem'd Deiphobus had heard my call,

But he secure lies guarded in the wall. 380

A God deceiv'd me; Pallas, 'twas thy deed,

Death, and black fate approach! 'Tis I must bleed.

No refuge now, no succour from above,

Great Jove deserts me, and the son of Jove,

Propitious once, and kind! then welcome fate! 385

'Tis true I perish, yet I perish great:

Yet in a mighty deed I shall expire,

Let future ages hear it, and admire!

Fierce, at the word, his weighty sword he drew,

And, all collected, on Achilles flew. 390

So Jove's bold bird, high balanc'd in the air,
 Stoops from the clouds to trufs the quiv'ring hare,
 Nor less Achilles his fierce soul prepares,
 Before his breast the flaming shield he bears,
 Refulgent orb! above his fourfold cone 395
 The gilded horse-hair sparkled in the sun,
 Nodding at ev'ry step: (Vulcanian frame!)
 And as he mov'd, his figure seem'd on flame.
 As radiant Hesper shines with keener light,
 Far-beaming o'er the silver host of night, 400
 When all the starry train emblaze the sphere:
 So shone the point of great Achilles' spear.
 In his right hand he waves the weapon round,
 Eyes the whole man, and meditates the wound;
 But the rich mail Patroclus lately wore, 405
 Securely cas'd the warrior's body o'er.
 One place at length he spies, to let in fate,
 Where 'twixt the neck and throat the jointed plate
 Gave entrance: thro' that penetrable part
 Furious he drove the well-directed dart: 410

ψ. 391. *So Jove's bold bird, etc.*] The poet takes up some time in describing the two great heroes before they close in fight. The verses are pompous and magnificent, and he illustrates his description with two beautiful similes: he makes a double use of this conduct, which not only raises our imagination to attend to so momentous an action, but by lengthening his narration keeps the mind in a pleasing suspense, and divides it between hopes and fears for the fate of Hector or Achilles.

ψ. 409. *Thro' that penetrable part Furious he drove, etc.*] It was necessary that the poet should be very par-

Nor pierc'd the wind-pipe yet, nor took the pow'r
Of speech, unhappy! from thy dying hour.
Prone on the field the bleeding warrior lies,
While thus triumphing, stern Achilles cries.

At last is Hector stretch'd upon the plain, 415
Who fear'd no vengeance for Patroclus slain :
Then, prince! you should have fear'd, what now you feel;
Achilles absent, was Achilles still.

Yet a short space the great avenger stay'd,
Then low in dust thy strength and glory lay'd. 420
Peaceful he sleeps, with all our rites adorn'd,
For ever honour'd, and for ever mourn'd:
While cast to all the rage of hostile pow'r,
Thee, birds shall mangle, and the dogs devour.

Then Hector fainting at th' approach of death. 425
By thy own soul! by those who gave thee breath!
By all the sacred prevalence of pray'r;
Ah, leave me not for Grecian dogs to tear!
The common rites of sepulture bestow,
To soothe a father's and a mother's woe; 430

particular in this point, because the arms that Hector wore, were the arms of Achilles, taken from Patroclus; and consequently as they were the work of Vulcan, they would preserve Hector from the possibility of a wound: the poet therefore to give an air of probability to his story, tells us that they were Patroclus's arms, and as they were not made for Hector, they might not exactly fit his body: so that it is not improbable but there might be some place about the neck of Hector so open, as to admit the spear of Achilles. Eustathius.

Let

Let their large gifts procure an urn at least,
And Hector's ashes in his country rest.

No, wretch accurst; relentless he replies,
(Flames, as he spoke, shot flashing from his eyes)
Not those who gave me breath shou'd bid me spare, 435
Nor all the sacred prevalence of pray'r.
Could I myself the bloody banquet join!
No—to the dogs that carcase I resign.
Should Troy, to bribe me, bring forth all her store,
And giving thousands, offer thousands more; 440

ψ. 347. *Could I myself the bloody banquet join!*] I have before hinted that there is something very fierce and violent in this passage; but I fancy that what I there observed will justify Homer in his relation, though not Achilles in his savage sentiments: yet the poet softens the expression by making Achilles only wish that his *heart would permit him* to devour him; this is much more tolerable than a passage in the Thebais of Statius, where Tydeus in the very pangs of death is represented as gnawing the head of his enemy.

ψ. 439. *Should Troy, to bribe me, etc.*] Such resolutions as Achilles here makes, are very natural to men in anger; he tells Hector that no motives shall ever prevail with him to suffer his body to be ransomed; yet when time had cooled his heat, and he had somewhat satisfied his revenge by insulting his remains, he restores them to Priam. This perfectly agrees with his conduct in the ninth book, where at first he gives a rough denial, and afterwards softens into an easier temper. And this is very agreeable to the nature of Achilles; his anger abates very slowly; it is stubborn, yet still it remits: had the poet drawn him as never to be pacified, he had outraged nature, and not represented his hero as a man, but as a monster. Eustathius.

Should Dardan Priam, and his weeping dame
 Drain their whole realm to buy one fun'ral flame:
 Their Hector on the pile they should not see,
 Nor rob the vultures of one limb of thee.

Then thus the chief his dying accents drew; 445
 Thy rage, implacable! too well I knew:
 The furies that relentless breast have steel'd,
 And curst thee with a heart that cannot yield.
 Yet think, a day will come, when fate's decree
 And angry Gods, shall wreak this wrong on thee; 450
 Phœbus and Paris shall avenge my fate,
 And stretch thee here, before this Scæan gate.

He ceas'd. The fates suppress'd his lab'ring breath,
 And his eyes stiffen'd at the hand of death;
 To the dark realm the spirit wings its way, 455
 (The manly body left a load of clay)
 And plaintive glides along the dreary coast,
 A naked, wand'ring, melancholy ghost!

Achilles, musing as he roll'd his eyes
 O'er the dead hero, thus (unheard) replies. 460
 Die thou the first! when Jove and heav'n ordain,
 I follow thee——He said, and stripp'd the slain.

ψ. 449. *A day will come——*] Hector *propheſies* at his death that Achilles shall fall by the hand of Paris. This confirms an observation made in a former note, that the words of dying men were looked upon as prophecies; but whether such conjectures are true or false, it appears from hence, that such opinions have prevailed in the world above three thousand years.

Then forcing backward from the gaping wound
 The reeking jav'lin, cast it on the ground.
 The thronging Greeks behold with wond'ring eyes 465
 His manly beauty and superior size :
 While some ignobler, the great dead deface
 With wounds ungen'rous, or with taunts disgrace.
 " How chang'd that Hector ! who like Jove of late
 " Sent light'ning on our fleets, and scatter'd fate ?" 470
 High o'er the slain the great Achilles stands,
 Begirt with heroes, and surrounding bands ;

ψ. 467. *The great dead deface With wounds, etc.*]
 Eustathius tells us that Homer introduces the soldiers wounding the dead body of Hector, in order to mitigate the cruelties which Achilles exercises upon it. For if every common soldier takes a pride in giving him a wound, what insults may we not expect from the inexorable, inflamed Achilles ? But I must confess myself unable to vindicate the poet in giving us such an idea of his countrymen. I think the former courage of their enemy should have been so far from moving them to revenge, that it should have recommended him to their esteem : what Achilles afterwards acts is suitable to his character, and consequently the poet is justified ; but surely all the Greeks were not of his temper ? Patroclus was not so dear to them all, as he was to Achilles. It is true, the poet represents Achilles (as Eustathius observes) enumerating the many ills they had suffered from Hector ; and seems to endeavour to infect the whole army with his resentment. Had Hector been living, they had been acted by a generous indignation against him : but these men seem as if they only dared approach him dead ; in short, what they say over his body is a mean insult, and the stabs they give it are cowardly and barbarous.

And thus aloud, while all the host attends.

Princes and leaders! countrymen and friends!

Since now at length the pow'rful will of heav'n 475

The dire destroyer to our arm has giv'n,

Is not Troy fall'n already? Haste, ye pow'rs!

See, if already their deserted tow'rs

Are left unmann'd; or if they yet retain

The souls of heroes, their great Hector slain? 480

But what is Troy, of glory what to me?

Or why reflects my mind on ought but thee,

Divine Patroclus! death has seal'd his eyes;

Unwept, unhonour'd, uninterr'd he lies!

§. 474. *The speech of Achilles.*] We have a very fine observation of Eustathius on this place, that the judgment and address of Homer here is extremely worthy of remark; he knew, and had often said, that the gods and fate had not granted Achilles the glory of taking Troy: there was then no reason to make him march against the town after the death of Hector, since all his efforts must have been ineffectual. What has the poet done in this conjuncture? It was but reasonable that the first thought of Achilles should be to march directly to Troy, and to profit himself of the general consternation into which the death of Hector had thrown the Trojans. We here see he knows the duty, and does not want the ability, of a great general; but after this on a sudden he changes his design, and derives a plausible pretence from the impatience he has to pay the last devoirs to his friend. The manners of Achilles, and what he has already done for Patroclus, make this very natural. At the same time, this turning off to the tender and pathetic has a fine effect; the reader in the very fury of the hero's vengeance, perceives that Achilles is still a man, and capable of softer passions.

Can his dear image from my soul depart, 485

Long as the vital spirit moves my heart?

If, in the melancholy shades below,

The flames of friends and lovers cease to glow,

Yet mine shall sacred last; mine undecay'd,

Burn on thro' death, and animate my shade. 490

Meanwhile, ye sons of Greece, in triumph bring

The corps of Hector, and your Pæans sing.

Be this the song, slow-moving tow'rd the shore,

"Hector is dead, and Ilion is no more."

Then his fell soul a thought of vengeance bred, 495

(Unworthy of himself, and of the dead)

ψ. 494. "*Hector is dead, and Ilion is no more.*" I have followed the opinion of Eustathius, who thought that what Achilles says here was the *chorus* or burden of a *song* of triumph, in which his troops bear a part with him, as he returns from this glorious combat. Dacier observes that this is very correspondent to the manners of those times; and instances in that passage of the book of Kings, when David returns from the conquest of Goliath: the women there go out to meet him from all the cities of Israel, and sing a triumphal song, the *chorus* whereof is, *Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands.*

ψ. 496. *Unworthy of himself, and of the dead.*] This inhumanity of Achilles in dragging the dead body of Hector, has been severely (and I think indeed not without some justice) censured by several, both ancients and moderns. Plato in his third book *de republica*, speaks of it with detestation: but methinks it is a great injustice to Homer, to reflect upon the morals of the author himself, for things which he only paints as the manners of a vicious hero.

The nervous ancles bor'd, his feet he bound
 With thongs inserted thro' the double wound;
 These fix'd up high behind the rolling wain,
 His graceful head was trail'd along the plain. 500
 Proud on his car th' insulting victor stood,
 And bore aloft his arms, distilling blood.
 He smites the steeds; the rapid chariot flies;
 The sudden clouds of circling dust arise.

It may justly be observed in general of all Plato's objections against Homer, that they are still in a view to morality, constantly blaming him for representing ill and immortal things as the opinions or actions of his persons. To every one of these, one general answer will serve, which is, that Homer as often describes ill things, in order to make us avoid them, as good, to induce us to follow them, (which is the case with all writers whatever.) But what is extremely remarkable, and evidently shews the injustice of Plato's censure, is, that many of those very actions for which he blames him, are expressly characterized and marked by Homer himself as evil and detestable, by previous expressions or cautions. Thus in the present place, before he describes this barbarity of Achilles, he tells us it was a most unworthy action.

-----Καὶ Ἐκτορα δῖον ἀεικία μὴδετο ἔργα.

When Achilles sacrifices the twelve young Trojans in l. 23. he repeats the same words. When Pandarus broke the truce in l. 4. he told us it was a mad, unjust deed;

-----τῷ δὲ πρῖνας ἄφρονι πῖθιν.

And so of the rest.

Now lost is all that formidable air ; 505

The face divine, and long descending hair

Purple the ground, and streak the sable sand ;

Deform'd, dishonour'd, in his native land !

Giv'n to the rage of an insulting throng !

And, in his parent's sight, now dragg'd along ! 510

The mother first beheld with sad survey ;

She rent her tresses, venerably grey,

And cast, far off, the regal veils away.

With piercing shrieks his bitter fate she moans,

While the sad father answers groans with groans, 515

Tears after tears his mournful cheeks o'erflow,

And the whole city wears one face of woe.

No less than if the rage of hostile fires

From her foundations curling to her spires,

ψ. 506. *The face divine, and long-descending hair.*]

It is impossible to read the actions of great men without having our curiosity raised to know the least circumstance that relates to them. Homer, to satisfy it, has taken care in the process of his poem to give us the shape of his heroes, and the very colour of their hair ; thus he has told us that Achilles's locks were yellow, and here the epithet *Κυάνας* shews us that those of Hector were of a darker colour : as to his person, he told us a little above, that it was so handsome, that all the Greeks were surprized to see it. Plutarch recites a remarkable story of the beauty of Hector : it was reported in Lacedæmon, that a handsome youth who very much resembled Hector was arrived there ; immediately the whole city run in such numbers to behold him, that he was trampled to death by the croud. Eustathius.

O'er the proud citadel at length should rise, 420
 And the last blaze send Ilion to the skies.
 The wretched monarch of the falling state,
 Distracted, presses to the Dardan gate.
 Scarce the whole people stop his desp'rate course,
 While strong affliction gives the feeble force : 525
 Grief tears his heart, and drives him to and fro,
 In all the raging impotence of woe.
 At length he roll'd in dust, and thus begun :
 Imploring all, and naming one by one.
 Ah ! let me, let me go where sorrow calls ; 530
 I, only I, will issue from your walls,
 (Guide or companion, friends ! I ask ye none)
 And bow before the murd'rer of my son.
 My grief perhaps his pity may engage ;
 Perhaps at least he may respect my age. 535
 He has a father too ; a man like me ;
 One, not exempt from age and misery,
 (Vig'rous no more, as when his young embrace
 Begot this pest of me, and all my race.)
 How many valiant sons, in early bloom, 540
 Has that curst hand sent headlong to the tomb !
 Thee, Hector ! last : thy loss (divinely brave)
 Sinks my sad soul with sorrow to the grave.

Y. 543. Sinks my sad soul with sorrow to the grave.]
 It is in the Greek,

Ἦν μ' ἄχος ὀξύκατοίσεται ἄνδρος ἔϊσω.

It is needless to observe to the reader with what a beautiful *pathos* the wretched father laments his son

Oh had thy gentle spirit past in peace,
 The son expiring in the fire's embrace, 545
 While both thy parents wept the fatal hour,
 And bending o'er thee, mix'd the tender show'r!
 Some comfort that had been, some sad relief,
 To melt in full satiety of grief!

Thus wail'd the father, grov'ling on the ground, 550
 And all the eyes of Ilion stream'd around.

Amidst her matrons Hecuba appears,
 (A mourning princess, and a train in tears)
 Ah why has heav'n prolong'd this hated breath,
 Patient of horrors, to behold thy death? 555
 Oh Hector! late thy parents pride and joy,
 The boast of nations! the defence of Troy!
 To whom her safety and her fame she ow'd,
 Her chief, her hero, and almost her God!
 O fatal change! become in one sad day 560
 A senseless corse! inanimated clay!

But not as yet the fatal news had spread
 To fair Andromache, of Hector dead;

Hector: it is impossible not to join with Priam in his sorrows. But what I would chiefly point out to my reader, is the beauty of this line, which is particularly tender, and almost word for word the same with that of the patriarch Jacob; who upon a like occasion breaks out into the same complaint, and tells his children, that if they deprive him of his son Benjamin, they will *bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.*

ψ. 563, etc.] The grief of Andromache, which is painted in the following part, is far beyond all the praises that can be given it; but I must take notice of

As yet no messenger had told his fate,
 Nor ev'n his stay without the Scæan gate. 565
 Far in the close recesses of the dome,
 Pensive she ply'd the melancholy loom;
 A growing work employ'd her secret hours,
 Confus'dly gay with intermingled flow'rs.
 Here fair-hair'd handmaids heat the brazen urn, 570
 The bath preparing for her Lord's return:
 In vain: alas! her Lord returns no more!
 Unbath'd he lies, and bleeds along the shore!
 Now from the walls the clamours reach her ear,
 And all her members shake with sudden fear; 575
 Forth from her iv'ry hand the shuttle falls,
 As thus, astonish'd, to her maids she calls.

Ah follow me! (she cry'd) what plaintive noise
 Invades my ear? 'Tis sure my mother's voice.
 My fault'ring knees their trembling frame desert, 580
 A pulse unusual flutters at my heart.
 Some strange disaster, some reverse of fate
 (Ye Gods avert it) threatens the Trojan state.

one particular which shews the great art of the poet. In order to make the wife of Hector appear yet more afflicted than his parents, he has taken care to increase her affliction by *surprize*: it is finely prepared by the circumstances of her being retired to her innermost apartment, of her employment in weaving a robe for her husband, (as may be conjectured from what she says afterward, *ψ*. 657.) and of her maids preparing the bath for his return: all which (as the critics have observed) augment the surprize, and render this reverse of fortune much more dreadful and afflicting.

Far be the omen which my thoughts suggest !
 But much I fear my Hector's dauntless breast 585
 Confronts Achilles ; chas'd along the plain,
 Shut from our walls ! I fear, I fear him slain !
 Safe in the croud he ever scorn'd to wait,
 And fought for glory in the jaws of fate :
 Perhaps that noble heat has cost his breath, 590
 Now quench'd for ever in the arms of death.

She spoke ; and furious, with distracted pace,
 Fears in her heart, and anguish in her face,
 Flies thro' the dome, (the maids her steps pursue)
 And mounts the walls, and sends around her view. 595
 Too soon her eyes the killing object found,
 The god-like Hector dragg'd along the ground.
 A sudden darkness shades her swimming eyes :
 She faints, she falls ; her breath, her colour flies.
 Her hair's fair ornaments, the braids that bound, 600
 The net that held them, and the wreath that crown'd,

ψ. 600. *Her hair's fair ornaments.*] Eustathius remarks, that in speaking of Andromache and Hecuba, Homer expatiates upon the ornaments of dress in Andromache, because she was a beautiful young princess ; but is very concise about that of Hecuba, because she was old, and wore a dress rather suitable to her age and gravity, than to her state, birth, and condition. I cannot pass over a matter of such importance as a lady's dress, without endeavouring to explain what sort of heads were worn above three thousand years ago.

It is difficult to describe particularly every ornament mentioned by the poet, but I shall lay before my female readers the bishop's explanation. The Ἀμρυξ was used,

The veil and diadem, flew far away;
 (The gift of Venus on her bridal day)
 Around a train of weeping sisters stands
 To raise her sinking with assistant hands. 605
 Scarce from the verge of death recall'd again,
 She faints, or but recovers to complain.

O wretched husband of a wretched wife!
 Born with one fate, to one unhappy life!
 For sure one star its baneful beam display'd 610
 On Priam's roof, and Hippoplacia's shade.
 From diff'rent parents, diff'rent climes we came,
 At diff'rent periods, yet our fate the same!
 Why was my birth to great Action ow'd,
 And why was all that tender care bestow'd? 615

τὸ τὰς ἐμπροσθίας τρίχας ἀναδεῖν, that is, to tie backwards the hair that grew on the forepart of the head: the Κεκρύραλος was a veil of net-work that covered the hair when it was so tied: Ἀναδίσκη was an ornament used κύκλῳ περὶ τὰς κροτάφους ἀναδεῖν, to tie backwards the hair that grew on the temples; and the Κρήδεμνον was a fillet, perhaps embroidered with gold, (from the expression of χρυσῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ) that bound the whole, and completed the dress.

The ladies cannot but be pleased to see so much learning and Greek upon this important subject.

Homer is in nothing more excellent than in that distinction of characters which he maintains through his whole poem: what Andromache here says, cannot be spoken properly by any but Andromache: there is nothing general in her sorrows, nothing that can be transferred to another character: the mother laments the son, and the wife weeps over the husband.

Would

Would I had never been!—O thou, the ghost
 Of my dead husband! miserably lost!
 Thou to the dismal realms for ever gone!
 And I abandon'd, desolate, alone!
 An only child, once comfort of my pains, 620
 Sad product now of hapless love remains!
 No more to smile upon his fire! no friend
 To help him now! no father to defend!
 For should he 'scape the sword, the common doom!
 What wrongs attend him, and what griefs to come? 625
 Ev'n from his own paternal roof expell'd,
 Some stranger plows his patrimonial field.
 The day, that to the shades the father sends,
 Robs the sad orphan of his father's friends:

v. 628. The day, that to the shades, etc.] The following verses, which so finely describe the condition of an orphan, have been rejected by some ancient critics: it is a proof there were always critics of no manner of taste; it being impossible any where to meet with a more exquisite passage. I will venture to say, there are not in all Homer any lines more worthy of him: the beauty of this tender and compassionate image is such, that it even makes amends for the many cruel ones, with which the Iliad is too much stained. These censurers imagined this description to be of too abject and mean a nature of one of the quality of Astyanax; but had they considered (says Eustathius) that these are the words of a fond mother, who feared every thing for her son; that women are by nature timorous, and think all misfortunes will happen, because there is a possibility that they may; that Andromache is in the very height of her sorrows, in the instant she is speaking; I fancy they would have altered their opinion.

He, wretched outcast of mankind ! appears 630
 For ever sad, for ever bath'd in tears ;
 Amongst the happy, unregarded he,
 Hangs on the robe, or trembles at the knee,
 While those his father's former bounty fed,
 Nor reach the goblet, nor divide the bread : 635
 The kindest but his present wants allay,
 To leave him wretched the succeeding day.
 Frugal compassion ! heedless they who boast
 Both parents still, nor feel what he has lost,
 Shall cry, " Be gone ! thy father feasts not here : " 640
 The wretch obeys, retiring with a tear.
 Thus wretched, thus retiring all in tears,
 To my sad soul Aftyanax appears !
 Forc'd by repeated insults to return,
 And to his widow'd mother vainly mourn. 645
 He, who with tender delicacy bred,
 With princes sported, and on dainties fed,

It is undoubtedly an aggravation to our misfortunes when they sink us in a moment from the highest flow of prosperity to the lowest adversity : the poet judiciously makes use of this circumstance, the more to excite our pity, and introduces the mother with the utmost tenderness, lamenting this reverse of fortune in her son ; changed all at once into a slave, a beggar, an orphan ! have we not examples in our own times of unhappy princes, whose condition renders this of Aftyanax but too probable ?

ψ. 647. *On dainties fed.*] It is in the Greek, " Who
 " upon his father's knees, used to eat marrow and the
 " fat of sheep." This would seem gross if it were literally translated, but it is a figurative expression ; in

And when still ev'ning gave him up to rest,
 Sunk soft in down upon the nurse's breast,
 Must—ah what must he not? Whom Ilion calls 650
 Astyanax, from her well-guarded walls,
 Is now that name no more, unhappy boy!
 Since now no more the father guards his Troy.
 But thou, my Hector, ly'st expos'd in air,
 Far from thy parent's and thy consort's care, 655
 Whose hand in vain, directed by her love,
 The martial scarf and robe of triumph wove.

the style of the orientals, marrow and fatness are taken for whatever is best, tenderest, and most delicious. Thus in Job xxi. 24. *Viscera ejus plena sunt adipe, et medullis ossa ejus irrigantur.* And xxxvi. 16. *Requies autem mensæ tuæ erit plena pinguedine.* In Jer. xxxi. 14. God says, that he will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness. *Inebriabo animam sacerdotum pinguedine.* Dacier. v. 657. *The martial scarf and robe of triumph wove.*]

This idea very naturally offers itself to a woman, who represents to herself the body of her husband dashed to pieces, and all his limbs dragged upon the ground uncovered; and nothing is more proper to excite pity. It is well known, that it was anciently the custom among princesses and great ladies to have large quantities of stuffs and moveables. This provision was more necessary in those times than now, because of the great consumption made of them on those occasions of mourning. Dacier.

I am of opinion that Homer had a farther view in expatiating thus largely upon the death of Hector. Every word that Hecuba, Priam, and Andromache speak, shews us the importance of Hector: every word adds a weight to the concluding action of the poem, and at the same time represents the sad effects of the anger of Achilles, which is the subject of it.

Now to devouring flames be these a prey,

Useless to thee, from this accursed day!

Yet let the sacrifice at least be paid,

660

An honour to the living, not the dead!

So spake the mournful dame: her matrons hear,
Sigh back her sighs, and answer tear-with tear.

T H E
I L I A D.
B O O K XXIII.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

ACHILLES and the *Myrmidons* do honours to the body of *Patroclus*. After the funeral feast he retires to the sea-shore; where falling asleep, the ghost of his friend appears to him, and demands the rites of burial; the next morning the soldiers are sent with mules and waggons to fetch wood for the pyre. The funeral procession, and the offering their hair to the dead. *Achilles* sacrifices several animals, and lastly twelve Trojan captives at the pile, then sets fire to it. He pays libations to the winds, which (at the instance of *Iris*) rise, and raise the flames. When the pile has burned all night, they gather the bones, place them in an urn of gold, and raise the tomb. *Achilles* institutes the funeral games: the chariot-race, the fight of the *Cæstus*, the wrestling, the foot-race, the single combat, the *Discus*, the shooting with arrows, the darting the javelin: the various descriptions of which, and the various success of the several antagonists, make the greatest part of the book.

In this book ends the thirtieth day. The night following, the ghost of *Patroclus* appears to *Achilles*: the one and thirtieth day is employed in felling the timber for the pile; the two and thirtieth in burning it; and the three and thirtieth in the games. The scene is generally on the sea shore.

THUS humbled in the dust, the pensive train
 Thro' the sad city mourn'd her hero slain.
 The body soil'd with dust, and black with gore,
 Lies on broad Hellespont's resounding shore:

This, and the following book, which contain the description of the funeral of Patroclus and other matters relating to Hector, are undoubtedly super-added to the grand catastrophe of the poem; for the story is completely finished with the death of that hero in the twenty-second book. Many judicious critics have been of opinion, that Homer is blameable for protracting it. Virgil closes the whole scene of action with the death of Turnus, and leaves the rest to be imagined by the mind of the reader: he does not draw the picture at full length, but delineates it so far, that we cannot fail of imagining the whole draught. There is however one thing to be said in favour of Homer, which may perhaps justify him in his method, that what he undertook to paint was the *anger of Achilles*: and as that anger does not die with Hector, but persecutes his very remains, so the poet still keeps up to his subject; nay, it seems to require that he should carry down the relation of that resentment, which is the foundation of his poem, till it is fully satisfied: and as this survives Hector, and gives the poet an opportunity of still shewing many sad effects of Achilles's anger, the two following books may be thought not to be excrescencies, but essential to the poem.

Virgil had been inexcusable had he trod in Homer's footsteps; for it is evident that the fall of Turnus, by giving Æneas a full power over Italy, answers the whole design and intention of the poem; had he gone farther, he had overshot his mark: and though Homer proceeds after Hector's death, yet the subject is still the *anger of Achilles*.

We are now past the war and violence of the Ilias, the scenes of blood are closed during the rest of the

The Grecians seek their ships, and clear the strand, 5
All, but the martial Myrmidonian band:

These yet assembled great Achilles holds,
And the stern purpose of his mind unfolds.

Not yet (my brave companions of the war)
Release your smoking coursers from the car; 10
But, with his chariot each in order led,
Perform due honours to Patroclus dead.
Ere yet from rest or food we seek relief,
Some rites remain, to glut our rage of grief.

The troops obey'd; and thrice in order led 15
(Achilles first) their coursers round the dead;
And thrice their sorrows and laments renew;
Tears bathe their arms, and tears the sands bedew.

poem; we may look back with a pleasing kind of horror upon the anger of Achilles, and see what dire effects it has wrought in the compass of nineteen days: Troy and Greece are both in mourning for it, heaven and earth, gods and men, have suffered in the conflict. The reader seems landed upon the shore after a violent storm; and has leisure to survey the consequences of the tempest, and the wreck occasioned by the former commotions, Troy weeping for Hector, and Greece for Patroclus. Our passions have been in an agitation since the opening of the poem; wherefore the poet, like some great master in music, softens his notes, and melts his readers into tenderness and pity.

¶. 18. *Tears bathe their arms, and tears the sands bedew,*

————— *Thetis aids their woe.* ————]

It is not easy to give a reason why Thetis should be said to excite the grief of the Myrmidons and of Achilles; it had seemed more natural for the mother to have com-

For such a warrior Thetis aids their woe,
Melts their strong hearts, and bids their eyes to flow. 20

posed the sorrows of the son, and restored his troubled mind to tranquillity.

But such a procedure would have outraged the character of Achilles, who is all along described to be of such a violence of temper, that he is not easy to be pacified at any time, much less upon so great an incident as the death of his friend Patroclus. Perhaps the poet made use of this fiction in honour of Achilles; he makes every passion of his hero considerable; his sorrow as well as anger is important, and he cannot grieve but a goddess attends him, and a whole army weeps.

Some commentators fancy that Homer animates the very sands of the sea, and the arms of the Myrmidons, and makes them sensible of the loss of Patroclus; the preceding words seem to strengthen that opinion, because the poet introduces a goddess to raise the sorrow of the army. But Eustathius seems not to give into this conjecture, and I think very judiciously; for what relation is there between the sands of the shores, and the arms of the Myrmidons? It would have been more poetical to have said, the sands and the rocks, than the sands and the arms; but it is very natural to say, that the soldiers wept so bitterly, that their armour and the very sands were wet with their tears. I believe this remark will appear very just by reading the verse, with a comma after τεύχεα, thus,

Δεύοντο ψάμαθοι, δεύοντο δὲ τεύχεα, φωτῶν
Δάκρυσι.

Then the construction will be natural and easy, period will answer period in the Greek, and the sense in English will be, the sands were wet, and the arms were wet, with the tears of the mourners.

But however this be, there is a very remarkable beauty in the run of the verse in Homer, every word

But chief, Pelides: thick-succeeding sighs
 Burst from his heart, and torrents from his eyes:
 His slaughter'ring hands, yet red with blood, he laid
 On his dead friend's cold breast, and thus he said.

All hail, Patroclus! let thy honour'd ghost 25
 Hear, and rejoice on Pluto's dreary coast;
 Behold! Achilles' promise is compleat;
 The bloody Hector stretch'd before thy feet.
 Lo! to the dogs his carcass I resign;
 And twelve sad victims of the Trojan line, 30
 Sacred to vengeance, instant shall expire,
 Their lives effus'd around thy fun'ral pyre.

Gloomy he said, and (horrible to view)
 Before the bier the bleeding Hector threw,

has a melancholy cadence, and the poet has not only
 made the sands and the arms, but even his very verse,
 to lament with Achilles.

ψ. 23. *His slaughter'ring hands, yet red with blood, he
 laid*

On his dead friend's cold breast——]

I could not pass by this passage without observing to my
 reader the great beauty of this epithet, *ἀνδροφόνος*. An
 ordinary poet would have contented himself with saying,
 he laid his hand upon the breast of Patroclus; but Ho-
 mer knows how to raise the most trivial circumstance,
 and by adding this one word, he laid his *deadly* hands,
 or his *murderous* hands, he fills our minds with great
 ideas, and by a single epithet recalls to our thoughts all
 the noble achievements of Achilles through the Iliad.

ψ. 25. *All hail, Patroclus, etc.*] There is in this a-
 postrophe of Achilles to the ghost of Patroclus, a sort of
 savageness, and a-mixture of softness and atrocity, which
 are highly conformable to his character. Dacier.

Prone on the dust. The Myrmidons around 35
 Unbrac'd their armour, and the steeds unbound.
 All to Achilles' sable ship repair,
 Frequent and full, the genial feast to share.
 Now from the well-fed swine black smoaks aspire,
 The bristly victims hissing o'er the fire; 40
 The huge ox bellowing falls; with feebl' cries
 Expires the goat; the sheep in silence dies.
 Around the hero's prostrate body flow'd,
 In one promiscuous stream, the reeking blood.
 And now a band of Argive monarchs brings 45
 The glorious victor to the king of kings.
 From his dead friend the pensiv' warrior went,
 With steps unwilling, to the regal tent.
 Th' attending heralds, as by office bound,
 With kindled flames the tripod-vase surround; 50
 To cleanse his conqu'ring hands from hostile gore,
 They urg'd in vain; the chief refus'd, and swore.
 No drop shall touch me, by almighty Jove!
 The first and greatest of the Gods above!
 'Till on the pyre I place thee; 'till I rear 55
 The grassy mound, and clip thy sacred hair.

ψ. 51. *To cleanse his conqu'ring hands——*
 ——*The chief refus'd——*]

This is conformable to the custom of the orientals: Achilles will not be induced to wash, and afterwards retires to the sea-shore, and sleeps on the ground. It is just thus that David mourns in the scriptures; he refuses to wash, or to take any repast, but retires from company, and lies upon the earth.

Some ease at least those pious rites may give,
 And soothe my sorrows, while I bear to live.
 Howe'er, reluctant as I am, I stay,
 And share your feast; but, with the dawn of day, 60
 (O king of men!) it claims thy royal care,
 That Greece the warrior's fun'ral pile prepare,
 And bid the forests fall: (such rites are paid
 To heroes slumb'ring in eternal shade)
 Then, when his earthly part shall mount in fire, 65
 Let the leagu'd squadrons to their posts retire.

He spoke; they hear him, and the word obey;
 The rage of hunger and of thirst allay,
 Then ease in sleep the labours of the day. }
 But great Pelides, stretch'd along the shore }
 Where dash'd on rocks the broken billows rore, 70
 Lies inly groaning; while on either hand
 The martial Myrmidons confus'dly stand:
 Along the grass his languid members fall,
 Tir'd with his chase around the Trojan wall; 75
 Hush'd by the murmurs of the rolling deep,
 At length he sinks in the soft arms of sleep.
 When lo! the shade before his closing eyes
 Of sad Patroclus rose, or seem'd to rise;

ψ. 78. *The ghost of Patroclus.*] Homer has introduced into the former parts of the poem the personages of gods and goddesses from heaven, and of furies from hell. He has embellished it with ornaments from earth, sea, and air; and he here opens a new scene, and brings to the view a ghost, the shade of the departed friend: by these methods he diversifies his poem with new and sur-

In the same robe he living wore, he came, 80
 In stature, voice, and pleasing look, the same.
 The form familiar hover'd o'er his head,
 And sleeps Achilles (thus the phantom said)
 Sleeps my Achilles, his Patroclus dead?
 Living, I seem'd his dearest, tend'rest care, 85
 But now forgot, I wander in the air;
 Let my pale corse the rites of burial know,
 And give me entrance in the realms below:
 'Till then, the spirit finds no resting-place,
 But here and there th' unbody'd spectres chace 90
 The vagrant dead around the dark abode,
 Forbid to cross th' irremeable flood.

prizing circumstances, and awakens the attention of the reader; at the same time he very poetically adapts his language to the circumstances of this imaginary Patroclus, and teaches us the opinions that prevailed in his time, concerning the state of separate souls.

y. 92. *Forbid to cross th' irremeable flood.*] It was the common opinion of the ancients, that the souls of the departed were not admitted into the number of the happy till their bodies had received the funeral rites; they supposed those that wanted them wandered an hundred years before they were wafted over the infernal river; Virgil perhaps had this passage of Homer in his view in the sixth *Æneis*, at least he coincides with his sentiments concerning the state of the departed souls.

*Hæc omnis, quam cernis, inops inhumataque turba est:
 Nec ripas datur horrendas, nec rauca fluenta
 Transportare prius, quam sedibus ossa quierunt;
 Centum errant annos, volitantque hæc littora circum;
 Tum demum admissi stagna exoptata revisunt.*

Now give thy hand; for to the farther shore
 When once we pass, the soul returns no more.
 When once the last funereal flames ascend, 95
 No more shall meet Achilles and his friend,
 No more our thoughts to those we lov'd make known,
 Or quit the dearest, to converse alone.
 Me fate has sever'd from the sons of earth,
 The fate fore-doom'd that waited from my birth: 100
 Thee too it waits; before the Trojan wall
 Ev'n great and godlike thou art doom'd to fall.
 Hear then; and as in fate and love we join,
 Ah suffer that my bones may rest with thine!

It was during this interval between death and the rites of funeral, that they supposed the only time allowed for separate spirits to appear to men; therefore Patroclus here tells his friend,

——— *To the farther shore*
When once we pass, the soul returns no more.

For the fuller understanding of Homer, it is necessary to be acquainted with his notion of the state of the soul after death: he followed the philosophy of the Ægyptians, who supposed man to be compounded of three parts, an intelligent mind, a vehicle for that mind, and a body; the mind they call *φρὴν*, or *ψυχή*, the vehicle *εἰδωλον*, *image* or *soul*, and the gross body *σῶμα*. The soul, in which the mind was lodged, was supposed exactly to resemble the body in shape, magnitude, and features; for this being in the body, as the statue in its mold, so soon as it goes forth is properly the image of that body in which it was inclosed: this it was that appeared to Achilles, with the full resemblance of his friend Patroclus. Vid. Dacier's life of Pythagoras, p. 71.

ψ. 104. *Ah suffer that my bones may rest with thine.*]

Together have we liv'd, together bred, 105

One house receiv'd us, and one table fed :

That golden urn thy goddess-mother gave,

May mix our ashes in one common grave.

And is it thou ? (he answers) to my sight

Once more return'st thou from the realms of night ? 110

Oh more than brother ! think each office paid,

Whate'er can rest a discontented shade ;

But grant one last embrace, unhappy boy !

Afford at least that melancholy joy.

There is something very pathetic in this whole speech of Patroclus ; he begins it with kind reproaches, and blames Achilles with a friendly tenderness ; he recounts to him the inseparable affection that had been between them in their lives, and makes it his last request, that they may not be parted even in death, but that their bones may rest in the same urn. The speech itself is of a due length ; it ought not to be very short, because this apparition is an incident intirely different from any other in the whole poem, and consequently the reader would not have been satisfied with a cursory mention of it ; neither ought it to be long, because this would have been contrary to the nature of such apparitions, whose stay upon earth has ever been described as very short, and consequently they cannot be supposed to use many words.

The circumstance of being buried in the same urn, is intirely conformable to the eastern custom : there are innumerable instances in the scriptures of great personages being buried with their fathers : so Joseph would not suffer his bones to rest in Ægypt, but commands his brethren to carry them into Canaan, to the burying-place of his father Jacob.

He said, and with his longing arms essay'd 115
In vain to grasp the visionary shade;
Like a thin smoke he sees the spirit fly,
And hears a feeble lamentable cry.

Confus'd he wakes; amazement breaks the bands
Of golden sleep, and starting from the sands, } 120
Pensive he muses with uplifted hands.

'Tis true, 'tis certain; man tho' dead, retains
Part of himself; th' immortal mind remains :
The form subsists without the body's aid,
Aerial semblance, and an empty shade! 125

ψ. 124. *The form subsists, without the body's aid,
Aerial semblance, and an empty shade.]*

The words of Homer are,

Ατὰρ φρένες ἐκ ἐνι πάμπαν.

In which there seems to be a great difficulty; it being not easy to explain how Achilles can say that the ghost of his friend had no understanding, when it had but just made such a rational and moving speech; especially when the poet introduces the apparition with the very shape, air, and voice of Patroclus.

But this passage will be clearly understood, by explaining the notion which the ancients entertained of the souls of the departed, according to the fore-cited triple division of *mind*, *image*, and *body*. They imagined that the soul was not only separated from the body at the hour of death, but that there was a farther separation of the φρήν, or understanding, from its ἰδωλόν, or vehicle; so that while the ἰδωλον, or image of the body, was in hell, the φρήν, or understanding might be in heaven: and that this is a true explication, is evident from a passage in the *Odysssey*, book 11. ψ. 600.

This night my friend, so late in battel lost,
 Stood at my side, a pensive, plaintive ghost;
 Ev'n now familiar, as in life, he came,
 Alas! how diff'rent! yet how like the same!

Thus while he spoke, each eye grew big with tears; 130
 And now the rosy-finger'd morn appears,
 Shews ev'ry mournful face with tears o'erspread,
 And glares on the pale visage of the dead.

Τὸν δὲ μετ', ἰσενόησα βίην, Ἡρακλεΐην
 "Εἰδωλον· αὐτὸς δὲ μετ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι
 Τέμπεται ἐν θαλάσῃ, καὶ ἔχει καλλίστυμον Ἡβην.

*Now I the strength of Hercules behold,
 A tow'ring spectre of gigantic mold;
 A shadowy form! for high in heav'n's abodes
 Himself resides, a God among the Gods:
 There in the bright assemblies of the skies
 He Nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.*

By this it appears that Homer was of opinion that Hercules was in heaven, while his εἰδωλον, or image, was in hell: so that when this second separation is made, the image or vehicle becomes a mere thoughtless form.

We have this whole doctrine very distinctly delivered by Plutarch in these words: * Man is a compound subject; but not of two parts, as is commonly believed, because the *understanding* is generally accounted a part of the *soul*; whereas indeed it as far exceeds the soul, as the soul is diviner than the body. Now the soul, when compounded with the understanding, makes reason; and when compounded with the body, passion: whereof the one is the source or principle of pleasure or pain, the other of vice or virtue. Man therefore properly dies two deaths; the first death makes him two of three, and the second makes him one of two." Plutarch, *of the face in the moon*.

But Agamemnon, as the rites demand,
 With mules and waggons sends a chosen band; 135
 To load the timber, and the pile to rear,
 A charge consign'd to Merion's faithful care.
 With proper instruments they take the road,
 Axes to cut, and ropes to fling the load,
 First march the heavy mules, securely slow, 140
 O'er hills, o'er dales, o'er crags, o'er rocks they go:

ψ. 141. *O'er hills, o'er dales, o'er crags, o'er rocks
 they go———*

*On all sides round the forest hurls her oaks
 Headlong——— —]*

The numbers in the original of this whole passage are admirably adapted to the images the verses convey to us. Every ear must have felt the propriety of sound in this line,

Πολλὰ δ' ἄναντα, κατάντα, πᾶρανταί τε, δόχμια τ' ἦλθον.

The other in its kind is no less exact,

Τάμνον ἐπειγόμενοι, ταὶ δὲ μεγάλα κλυπίσσαι.
 Πίπλον-----

Dionysius of Halicarnassus has collected many instances of these sorts of beauties in Homer. This description of felling the forests, so excellent as it is, is comprehended in a few lines, which has left room for a larger and more particular one in Statius, one of the best (I think) in that author.

—————*Cadit ardua fagus,
 Chaoniumque nemus, brumæque illæsa cupressus;
 Procumbunt piceæ, flammis alimenta supremis,
 Ornique, iliciæque trabes, metuandaque sulco*

Jumping, high o'er the shrubs of the rough ground,
Rattle the clatt'ring cars, and the skockt axles bound.

But when arriv'd at Ida's spreading woods,

(Fair Ida, water'd with descending floods) 145.

Loud sounds the axe, redoubling strokes on strokes;

On all sides round the forest hurls her oaks

Headlong. Deep-echoing groan the thickets brown;

Then rustling, crackling, crashing, thunder down.

Taxus, et infandos belli potura cruores

Fraxinus, atque situ non expugnabile robur:

Hinc audax abies, et odore vulnere pinus

Scinditur, acclinant intonsa cacumina terræ

Alnus amica fretis, nec inhospita vitibus ulmus, etc.

I the rather cite this fine passage, because I find it copied by two of the greatest poets of our own nation, Chaucer and Spenser. The first in the *assembly of fowls*, the second in his *fairy queen*, lib. 1.

The sailing pine, the cedar proud and tall,

The vine-prop elm, the poplar never dry,

The builder oak, sole king of forests all,

The aspin good for slaves, the cypress funeral.

The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors,

And poets sage; the fir that weepeth still,

The willow, worn of ferslern paramours,

The yew obedient to the bender's will,

The birch for shafts, the fallow for the mill,

The myrrh, sweet-bleeding in the bitter wound,

The warlike beech, the ash for nothing ill,

The fruitful olive, and the plantane round,

The carver holme, the maple seldom inward sound.

The wood the Grecians cleave, prepar'd to burn; 150

And the slow mules the same rough road return.

The sturdy woodmen equal burdens bore

(Such charge was giv'n 'em) to the sandy shore;

There on the spot which great Achilles shov'd,

They eas'd their shoulders, and dispos'd the load; 155

Circling around the place, where times to come

Shall view Patroclus' and Achilles' tomb.

The hero bids his martial troops appear

High on their cars in all the pomp of war;

Each in refulgent arms his limbs attires, 160

All mount their chariots, combatants and squires.

The chariots first proceed, a shining train;

Then clouds of foot that smoke along the plain;

Next these the melancholy band appear,

Amidst, lay dead Patroclus on the bier: 165

O'er all the corse their scatter'd locks they throw;

Achilles next, oppress'd with mighty woe,

ψ. 160. *Each in refulgent arms, etc.*] It is not to be supposed that this was a general custom used at all funerals; but Patroclus being a warrior, he is buried like a soldier, with military honours. Eustathius.

ψ. 166. *O'er all the corse their scatter'd locks they throw.*]

The ceremony of cutting off the hair in honour of the dead, was practised not only among the Greeks, but also among other nations; thus Statius Thebaid 6.

———*Tergoque et pectore fusam
Caesariem ferro minuit, sectisque jacentis
Obnubit tenuia ora comis.*

Supporting with his hands the hero's head,
Bends o'er th' extended body of the dead.

This custom is taken notice of in holy scripture: Ezekiel describing a great lamentation, says, *They shall make themselves utterly bald for thee*, ch. xxvii. ψ. 31. I believe it was done not only in token of sorrow, but perhaps had a concealed meaning, that as the hair was cut from the head, and was never more to be joined to it, so was the dead for ever cut off from the living, never more to return.

I must observe that this ceremony of cutting off the hair was not always in token of sorrow; Lycophron in his Cassandra, ψ. 976. describing a general lamentation, says,

Κρατὸς δ' ἄκυρος νῶτα καλλύνει τριβή.

A length of unshorn hair adorn'd their backs.

And that the ancients sometimes had their hair cut off in token of joy, is evident from Juvenal, Sat. 12. ψ. 82.

—————*Gaudet ibi vertice rasō*

Garrula securi narrare pericula nautæ.

This seeming contradiction will be solved by having respect to the different practices of different nations. If it was the general custom of any country to wear long hair, then the cutting it off was a token of sorrow; but if it was the custom to wear short hair, then the letting it grow long and neglecting it, shewed that such people were mourners.

ψ. 168. *Supporting with his hands the hero's head.*] Achilles follows the corpse as chief mourner, and sustains the head of his friend: this last circumstance seems to be general; thus Euripides in the funeral of Rhesus, ψ. 886.

Patroclus decent on th' appointed ground 170

They place, and heap the sylvan pile around.

But great Achilles stands apart in pray'r,

And from his head divides the yellow hair;

Those curling locks which from his youth he vow'd,

And sacred grew, to Sperchius' honour'd flood: 175

Then sighing, to the deep his looks he cast,

And roll'd his eyes around the wat'ry waste.

Sperchius! whose waves in mazy errors lost

Delightful roll along my native coast!

To whom we vainly vow'd, at our return, 180

These locks to fall, and hecatombs to burn:

Τίς ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς θεός, ὦ βασιλεῦ,

Τὸν νεώδμητον ἐν χερσὶν

Φοράδην πέμπει;

*What God, O king, with his hands supports the head of the
deceased?*

γ. 175. *And sacred grew to Sperchius' honour'd flood.]*
It was the custom of the ancients not only to offer their own hair, but likewise to consecrate that of their children to the river-gods of their country. This is what Pausanias shews in his Attics: *Before you pass the Cephissu (says he) you find the tomb of Theodorus, who was the most excellent actor of his time for tragedy; and on the banks you see two statues, one of Mnesimachus, and the other of his son, who cut off his hair in honour of the rivers; for that this was in all ages the custom of the Greeks, may be inferred from Homer's poetry, where Peleus promises by a solemn vow to consecrate to the river Sperchius the hair of his son, if he returns safe from the Trojan war. This custom was likewise in Ægypt, where Philostratus tells us, that Memnon consecrated his hair to the Nile. This practice of Achilles was imitated by Alexander at the funeral of Hephæstion. Spondanus.*

Full fifty rams to bleed in sacrifice,
 Where to the day thy silver fountains rise,
 And where in shade of consecrated bow'rs
 The altars stand, perfum'd with native flow'rs! 185
 So vow'd my father, but he vow'd in vain;
 No more Achilles sees his native plain;
 In that vain hope these hairs no longer grow,
 Patroclus bears them to the shades below.

Thus o'er Patroclus while the hero pray'd, 190
 On his cold hand the sacred lock he laid.
 Once more afresh the Grecian sorrows flow:
 And now the sun had set upon their woe;
 But to the king of men thus spoke the chief.
 Enough Atrides! give the troops relief: 195
 Permit the mourning legions to retire,
 And let the chiefs alone attend the pyre;
 The pious care be ours, the dead to burn——
 He said: the people to their ships return:
 While those deputed to interr the slain, 200
 Heap with a rising pyramid the plain.
 A hundred foot in length, a hundred wide,
 The growing structure spreads on ev'ry side;
 High on the top the manly corse they lay,
 And well-fed sheep, and sable oxen slay: 205
 Achilles cover'd with their fat the dead,
 And the pil'd victims round the body spread.
 Then jars of honey, and of fragrant oil
 Suspends around, low-bending o'er the pile.

Four sprightly courfers, with a deadly groan 210

Pour forth their lives, and on the pyre are thrown.

Of nine large dogs, domestic at his board,

Fall two, selected to attend their Lord. 211

Then last of all, and horrible to tell,

Sad sacrifice ! twelve Trojan captives fell. 215

On these the rage of fire victorious preys,

Involves and joins them in one common blaze.

Smear'd with the bloody rites, he stands on high,

And calls the spirit with a dreadful cry. 219

All hail, Patroclus ! let thy vengeful ghost 220

Hear, and exult on Pluto's dreary coast.

Behold, Achilles' promise fully paid,

Twelve Trojan heroes offer'd to thy shade;

But heavier fates on Hector's corse attend, 225

Sav'd from the flames, for hungry dogs to rend.

So spake he, threat'ning : but the Gods made vain

His threat, and guard inviolate the slain :

Celestial Venus hover'd o'er his head,

And roseate unguents, heav'nly fragrance ! shed :

ψ. 228. *Celestial Venus*, etc.] Homer has here introduced a *series* of allegories in the compass of a few lines : the body of Hector may be supposed to continue beautiful even after he was slain ; and Venus being the president of beauty, the poet by a natural fiction tells us it was preserved by that goddess.

Apollo's covering the body with a cloud is a very natural allegory : for the sun (says Eustathius) has a double quality which produces contrary effects ; the heat of it causes a dryness, but at the same time it exhales the vapours of the earth, from whence the clouds

She watch'd him all the night, and all the day, 230

And drove the bloodhounds from their destin'd prey.

Nor sacred Phœbus less employ'd his care;

He pour'd around a veil of gather'd air,

And kept the nerves undry'd, the flesh intire,

Against the solar beam and Sirian fire. 235

Nor yet the pile where dead Patroclus lies,
Smokes, nor as yet the sullen flames arise;

But fast beside Achilles stood in pray'r,

Invok'd the Gods whose spirit moves the air,

And victims promis'd, and libations cast, 240

To gentle Zephyr and the Boreal blast:

He call'd th' aerial pow'rs, along the skies

To breathe, and whisper to the fires to rise.

The winged Iris heard the hero's call,

And instant hasten'd to their airy hall, 245

Where, in old Zephyr's open courts on high,

Sate all the blust'ring brethren of the sky.

She shone amidst them, on her painted bow;

The rocky pavement glitter'd with the show.

All from the banquet rise, and each invites 250

The various Goddesses to partake the rites.

Not so, (the dame reply'd) I haste to go

To sacred Ocean, and the floods below:

of heaven are formed. This allegory may be founded upon truth; there might happen to be a cool season while Hector lay unburied, and Apollo, or the sun, raising clouds which intercept the heat of his beams, by a very easy fiction in poetry may be introduced in person to preserve the body of Hector.

Ev'n now our solemn hecatombs attend,
 And heav'n is feasting on the world's green end, 255
 With righteous Æthiops (uncorrupted train!)
 Far on th' extremeſt limits of the main.
 But Peleus' ſon intreats, with ſacrifice,
 The Weſtern Spirit, and the North to riſe;
 Let on Patroclus' pile your blaſt be driv'n, 260
 And bear the blazing honours high to heav'n.

Swift as the word, ſhe vaniſh'd from their view;
 Swift as the word the winds tumultuous flew;

¶ 263. *The allegory of the winds.*] A poet ought to expreſs nothing vulgarly; and ſure no poet ever treſpaſſed leſs againſt this rule than Homer; the fruitfulneſs of his invention is continually raiſing incidents new and ſurpriſing. Take this paſſage out of its poetical dreſs, and it will be no more than this: a ſtrong gale of wind blew, and ſo increaſed the flame that it ſoon conſumed the pile. But Homer introduces the gods of the winds in perſon: and Iris, or the rain-bow, being (as Euſtathius obſerves) a ſign not only of ſhowers, but of winds, he makes them come at her ſummons.

Every circumſtance is well adapted: as ſoon as the winds ſee Iris, they riſe; that is, when the rainbow appears, the wind riſes: ſhe reſuſes to ſit, and immediately returns; that is, the rainbow is never ſeen long at one time, but ſoon appears, and ſoon vaniſhes: ſhe returns over the ocean; that is, the bow is compoſed of waters, and it would have been an unnatural fiction to have deſcribed her as paſſing by land.

The winds are all together in the cave of Zephyrus, which may imply that they were there as at their general rendezvous; or that the nature of all the winds is the ſame; or that the weſtern wind is in that country the moſt conſtant, and conſequently it may be ſaid that at

Forth burst the stormy band with thund'ring rore,
 And heaps on heaps the clouds are tost before. 265
 To the wide main then stooping from the skies,
 The heaving deeps in wat'ry mountains rise:
 Troy feels the blast along her shaking walls,
 'Till on the pile the gather'd tempest falls.
 The structure crackles in the roaring fires, 270
 And all the night the plenteous flame aspires.
 All night Achilles hails Patroclus' soul,
 With large libation from the golden bowl.
 As a poor father, helpless and undone,
 Mourns o'er the ashes of an only son, 275
 Takes a sad pleasure the last bones to burn,
 And pour in tears, ere yet they close the urn:
 So stay'd Achilles, circling round the shore,
 So watch'd the flames, 'till now they flame no more.
 'Twas when, emerging thro' the shades of night, 280
 The morning planet told th' approach of light;

such seasons all the winds are assembled in one corner, or rendezvous with Zephyrus.

Iris will not enter the cave: it is the nature of the rainbow to be stretched intirely upon the surface, and therefore this fiction is agreeable to reason.

When Iris says that the gods are partaking hecatombs in Æthiopia, it is to be remembered that the gods are represented there in the first book, before the scenes of war were opened; and now they are closed, they return thither. Eustathius.——Thus Homer makes the anger of his hero so important, that it roused heaven to arms, and now when it is almost appeased, Achilles as it were gives peace to the gods.

And fast behind, Aurora's warmer ray
 O'er the broad ocean pour'd the golden day :
 Then sunk the blaze, the pile no longer burn'd,
 And to their caves the whistling winds return'd: 285
 Across the Thracian seas their course they bore;
 The ruffled seas beneath their passage rore.

Then parting from the pile he ceas'd to weep,
 And sunk to quiet in th' embrace of sleep,
 Exhausted with his grief: meanwhile the croud 290
 Of thronging Grecians round Achilles stood;
 The tumult wak'd him: from his eyes he shook
 Unwilling slumber, and the chiefs bespoke.

Ye kings and princes of th' Achaian name!
 First let us quench the yet remaining flame 295
 With sable wine; then, (as the rites direct)
 The hero's bones with careful view select:
 (Apart, and easy to be known they lie,
 Amidst the heap, and obvious to the eye:
 The rest around the margins will be seen, 300
 Promiscuous, steeds, and immolated men)
 These wrapt in double cawls of fat, prepare;
 And in the golden vase dispose with care;
 There let them rest with decent honour laid,
 'Till I shall follow to th' infernal shade. 305
 Meantime erect the tomb with pious hands,
 A common structure on the humble sands;

Hereafter Greece some nobler work may raise,
And late posterity record our praise.

The Greeks obey; where yet the embers glow } 310
Wide o'er the pile the sable wine they throw,
And deep subsides the ashy heap below. }

Next the white bones his sad companions place
With tears collected, in the golden vase.

The sacred relicks to the tent they bore; 315

The urn a veil of linen cover'd o'er.

That done, they bid the sepulchre aspire,

And cast the deep foundations round the pyre;

High in the midst they heap the swelling bed

Of rising earth, memorial of the dead. 320

The swarming populace the chief detains,

And leads amidst a wide extent of plains;

ψ. 308. *Hereafter Greece a nobler pile shall raise.*] We see how Achilles consults his own glory; the desire of it prevails over his tenderness for Patroclus, and he will not permit any man, not even his beloved Patroclus, to share an equality of honour with himself, even in the grave. Eustathius.

- ψ. 321. *The games for Patroclus.*] The conduct of Homer in enlarging upon the games at the funeral of Patroclus is very judicious: there had undoubtedly been such honours paid to several heroes during this war, as appears from a passage in the ninth book, where Agamemnon to enhance the value of the horses which he offers Achilles, says, that any person would be rich that had treasures equal to the value of the prizes they had won; which races must have been run during the siege: for had they been before it, the horses would now have been too old to be of any value, this being the tenth

There plac'd 'em round: then from the ships proceeds
 A train of oxen, mules, and stately steeds,
 Vases and tripods, for the fun'ral games, 325
 Resplendent brags, and more resplendent dames.
 First stood the prizes to reward the force
 Of rapid racers in the dusty course.
 A woman for the first, in beauty's bloom,
 Skill'd in the needle, and the lab'ring loom; 330
 And a large vase, where two bright handles rise,
 Of twenty measures its capacious size.
 The second victor claims a mare unbroke,
 Big with a mule, unknowing of the yoke;

year of the war. But the poet passes all those games over in silence, and reserves them for this season; not only in honour of Patroclus, but also of his hero Achilles; who exhibits games to a whole army; great generals are candidates for the prizes, and he himself sits the judge and arbitrator: thus in peace as well as war the poet maintains the superiority of the character of Achilles.

But there is another reason why the poet deferred to relate any games that were exhibited at any preceding funerals: the death of Patroclus was the most eminent period; and consequently the most proper time for such games.

It is farther observable, that he chuses this peculiar time with great judgment. When the fury of the war raged, the army could not well have found leisure for the games, and they might have met with interruption from the enemy: but Hector being dead, all Troy was in confusion: they are in too great a consternation to make any attempts, and therefore the poet could not possibly have chosen a more happy opportunity. Eustathius.

The third, a charger yet untouch'd by flame; 335

Four ample measures held the shining frame:

Two golden talents for the fourth were plac'd;

An ample double bowl contents the last.

These in fair order rang'd upon the plain,

The hero, rising, thus address the train. 340

Behold the prizes, valiant Greeks! decreed

To the brave rulers of the racing steed;

Prizes which none beside ourself could gain,

Should our immortal coursers take the plain;

(A race unrivall'd, which from Ocean's God 345

Peleus receiv'd, and on his son bestow'd.)

But this no time our vigour to display,

Nor suit, with them, the games of this sad day:

Lost is Patroclus now, that wont to deck

Their flowing manes, and sleek their glossy neck. 350

ŷ. 349. *Lost is Patroclus now, etc.*] I am not ignorant that Homer has frequently been blamed for such little digressions as these; in this passage he gives us the genealogy of his horses, which he has frequently told us in the preceding part of the poem. But Eustathius justifies his conduct, and says that it was very proper to commend the virtue of these horses upon this occasion, when horses were to contend for victory: at the same time he takes an opportunity to make an honourable mention of his friend Patroclus, in whose honour these games were exhibited.

It may be added as a farther justification of Homer that this last circumstance is very natural; Achilles while he commends his horses, remembers how careful Patroclus had been of them: his love for his friend is so great, that the minutest circumstance recalls him to

Sad, as they shar'd in human grief, they stand,
And trail those graceful honours on the sand!

Let others for the noble task prepare,
Who trust the courser, and the flying car.

Fir'd at his word, the rival racers rise; 355

But far the first, Eumelus hopes the prize,
Fam'd thro' Pieria for the fleetest breed,

And skill'd to manage the high-bounding steed.

With equal ardour bold Tydides swell'd

The steeds of Tros beneath his yoke compell'd, 360

(Which late obey'd the Dardan chief's command,

When scarce a God redeem'd him from his hand.)

Then Menelaus his Podargus brings,

And the fam'd courser of the king of kings:

Whom rich Echepolus, (more rich than brave) 365

To 'scape the wars, to Agamemnon gave,

his mind; and such little digressions, such avocations of thought as these, very naturally proceed from the overflows of love and sorrow,

ψ. 365. *Whom rich Echepolus, etc.*] One would think that Agamemnon might be accused of avarice, in dispensing with a man from going to the war for the sake of a horse; but Aristotle very well observes, that this prince is praise-worthy for having preferred a horse to a person so cowardly, and so incapable of service. It may be also conjectured from this passage, that even in those elder times it was the custom, that those who were willing to be excused from the war, should give either a horse or a man, and often both. Thus Scipio going to Africa, ordered the Sicilians either to attend him, or to give him horses or men: and Agesilaus being at Ephesus and wanting cavalry, made a proclamation,

(Æthe her name) at home to end his days,
 Base wealth preferring to eternal praise.
 Next him Antilochus demands the course,
 With beating heart, and cheers his Pylian horse. 370
 Experienc'd Nestor gives his son the reins,
 Directs his judgment, and his heat restrains;

that the rich men who would not serve in the war should be dispensed with, provided they furnished a man and a horse in their stead: in which, says Plutarch, he wisely followed the example of king Agamemnon, who excused a very rich coward from serving in person, for a present of a good mare. Eustathius. Dacier.

ψ. 371. *Experienc'd Nestor*, etc.] The poet omits no opportunity of paying honour to his old favourite Nestor, and I think he is no where more particularly complemented than in this book. His age had disabled him from bearing any share in the games; and yet he artfully introduces him not as a mere spectator, but as an actor in the sports. Thus he as it were wins the prize for Antilochus; Antilochus wins not by the swiftness of his horses, but by the wisdom of Nestor.

This fatherly tenderness is wonderfully natural: we see him in all imaginable inquietude and concern for his son; he comes to the barrier, stands beside the chariot, animates his son by his praises, and directs him by his lessons: you think the old man's soul mounts on the chariot with his Antilochus, to partake the same dangers, and run the same career.

Nothing can be better adapted to the character than this speech; he expatiates upon the advantages of wisdom over strength, which is a tacit complement to himself: and had there been a prize for wisdom, undoubtedly the old man would have claimed it as his right. Eustathius.

Nor idly warns the hoary fire, nor hears

The prudent son with unattending ears.

My son, tho' youthful ardour fire thy breast, 375

The Gods have lov'd thee, and with arts have blest.

Neptune and Jove on thee conferr'd the skill,

Swift round the goal to turn the flying wheel.

To guide thy conduct, little precept needs;

But slow, and past their vigour, are my steeds. 380

Fear not thy rivals, tho' for swiftness known,

Compare those rivals judgment, and thy own:

It is not strength, but art, obtains the prize,

And to be swift is less than to be wise;

'Tis more by art, than force of num'rous strokes, 385

The dext'rous woodman shapes the stubborn oaks;

By art the pilot, thro' the boiling deep

And howling tempest, steers the fearless ship:

And 'tis the artist wins the glorious course,

Not those, who trust in chariots, and in horse. 390

In vain unskilful to the goal they strive,

And short, or wide, th' ungovern'd courser drive:

While with sure skill, tho' with inferior steeds,

The knowing racer to his end proceeds;

Fix'd on the goal his eye fore-runs the course, 395

His hand unerring steers the steady horse,

And now contracts, or now extends the rein,

Observing still the foremost on the plain.

Mark then the goal, 'tis easy to be found;

Yon' aged trunk, a cubit from the ground; 400

Of some once stately oak the last remains,

Or hardy fir, unperish'd with the rains.

Inclos'd with stones conspicuous from afar,

And round, a circle for the wheeling car.

(Some tomb perhaps of old, the dead to grace; 405

Or then, as now, the limit of a race)

Bear close to this, and warily proceed,

A little bending to the left hand steed;

But urge the right, and give him all the reins;

While thy strict hand his fellow's head restrains, 410

And turns him short; 'till, doubling as they roll,

The wheel's round naves appear to brush the goal.

Yet (not to break the car, or lame the horse)

Clear of the stony heap direct the course;

Left thro' incaution failing, thou may'st be 415

A joy to others, a reproach to me.

So shalt thou pass the goal, secure of mind,

And leave unskilful swiftness far behind.

Tho' thy fierce rival drove the matchless steed

Which bore Adrastus, of celestial breed; 420

Or the fam'd race thro' all the regions known,

That whirl'd the car of proud Laomedon.

Thus, (nought unsaid) the much-advising sage

Concludes; then fate, stiff with unwieldy age.

Next bold Meriones was seen to rise, 425

The last, but not least ardent for the prize.

They mount their seats; the lots their place dispose;
(Roll'd in his helmet, these Achilles throws.)

Young Nestor leads the race: Eumelus then;

And next the brother of the king of men: 430

Thy lot, Meriones, the fourth was cast;

And far the bravest, Diomed, was last.

ψ. 427. *The lots their place dispose.*] According to these lots the charioteers took their places; but to know whether they stood all in an equal front, or one behind another, is a difficulty: Eustathius says, the ancients were of opinion that they did not stand in one front; because it is evident that he who had the first lot, had a great advantage of the other charioteers: if he had not, why should Achilles cast lots? Madam Dacier is of opinion that they all stood a-breast at the barrier, and that the first would still have a sufficient advantage, as he was nearer the bound, and stood within the rest; whereas the others must take a larger circle, and consequently were forced to run a greater compass of ground. Phœnix was placed as an inspector of the race, that is, says Eustathius, he was to make report whether they had observed the laws of the race in their several turnings.

Sophocles observes the same method with Homer in relation to the lots and inspectors, in his *Electra*.

-----Οἱ τεταγμένοι βραβεῖς

Κλήροις ἔπηλαν καὶ κατέστησαν δίφρον.

The constituted judges assigned the places according to the lots. The ancients say that the charioteers started at the Sigæum, where the ships of Achilles lay, and ran towards the Rhæteum, from the ships towards the shores. But Aristarchus affirmed that they run in the compass of ground five *stadia*, which lay between the wall and the tents toward the shore. Eustathius.

They stand in order an impatient train;
 Pelides points the barrier on the plain,
 And sends before old Phœnix to the place; 435
 To mark the racers, and to judge the race.
 At once the coursers from the barrier bound;
 The lifted scourges all at once resound;
 Their heart, their eyes, their voice, they send before;
 And up the champain thunder from the shore: 440
 Thick, where they drive, the dusty clouds arise,
 And the lost courser in the whirlwind flies;
 Loose on their shoulders the long manes reclin'd,
 Float in their speed, and dance upon the wind:
 The smoaking chariots, rapid as they bound, 445
 Now seem to touch the sky, and now the ground.
 While hot for fame, and conquest all their care,
 (Each o'er his flying courser hung in air)
 Erect with ardour, pois'd upon the rein,
 They pant, they stretch, they shout along the plain. 450
 Now, (the last compass fetch'd around the goal)
 At the near prize each gathers all his soul,
 Each burns with double hope, with double pain,
 Tears up the shore, and thunders tow'rd the main.
 First flew Eumelus on Pheretrian steeds; 455
 With those of Tros, bold Diomed succeeds:
 Close on Eumelus' back they puff the wind,
 And seem just mounting on his car behind;

ψ. 458. And seem just mounting on his car behind.] A more natural image than this could not be thought of. The poet makes us spectators of the race, we see Diomed

Full on his neck he feels the sultry breeze,
 And hov'ring o'er, their stretching shadows sees. 460
 Then had he lost, or left a doubtful prize;
 But angry Phœbus to Tydides flies,
 Strikes from his hand the scourge, and renders vain
 His matchless horses labour on the plain.
 Rage fills his eye with anguish, to survey 465
 Snatch'd from his hope, the glories of the day.

med pressing upon Eumelus so closely, that his chariot seems to climb the chariot of Eumelus.

ψ. 465. *Rage fills his eye with anguish to survey, etc.*] We have seen Diomed surrounded with innumerable dangers acting in the most perilous scenes of blood and death, yet never shed one tear: and now he weeps on a small occasion, for a mere trifle: this must be ascribed to the nature of mankind, who are often transported with trifles; and there are certain unguarded moments in every man's life; so that he who could meet the greatest dangers with intrepidity, may through anger be betrayed into an indecency. Eustathius.

The reason why Apollo is angry at Diomed, according to Eustathius, is because he was interested for Eumelus, whose mares he had fed, when he served Admetus; but I fancy he is under a mistake: this indeed is a reason why he should favour Eumelus, but not why he should be angry at Diomed. I rather think that the quarrel of Apollo with Diomed was personal; because he offered him a violence in the fifth book, and Apollo stillresents it.

The fiction of Minerva's assisting Diomed is grounded upon his being so wise as to take a couple of whips to prevent any mischance: so that Wisdom, or Pallas, may be said to lend him one. Eustathius.

The fraud celestial Pallas fees with pain,
 Springs to her knight, and gives the scourge again,
 And fills his steeds with vigour. At a stroke,
 She breaks his rival's chariot from the yoke; 470
 No more their way the startled horses held;
 The car revers'd came ratling on the field;
 Shot headlong from his seat, beside the wheel,
 Prone on the dust th' unhappy master fell;
 His batter'd face and elbows strike the ground; 475
 Nose, mouth and front, one undistinguish'd wound;
 Grief stops his voice, a torrent drowns his eyes;
 Before him far the glad Tydides flies;
 Minerva's spirit drives his matchless pace,
 And crowns him victor of the labour'd race. 480

The next, tho' distant, Menelaus succeeds;
 While thus young Nestor animates his steeds.
 Now, now, my gen'rous pair, exert your force:
 Not that we hope to match Tydides' horse,
 Since great Minerva wings their rapid way, 485
 And gives their lord the honours of the day.

ψ. 483 *The speech of Antilochus to his horses.*] I fear Antilochus his speech to his horses is blameable; Eustathius himself seems to think it a fault that he should speak so much in the very heat of the race. He commands and soothes, counsels and threatens his horses, as if they were reasonable creatures. The subsequent speech of Menelaus is more excusable as it is more short, but both of them are spoken in a passion, and anger we know makes us speak to every thing, and we discharge it upon the most senseless objects.

But reach Atrides ! shall his mare out-go
 Your swiftneſs ? vanquiſh'd by a female foe ?
 Thro' your neglect, if lagging on the plain
 The laſt ignoble gift be all we gain ; 490
 No more ſhall Neſtor's hand your food ſupply,
 The old man's fury riſes, and ye die.
 Haſte then ; yon' narrow road before our fight
 Preſents th' occaſion, could we uſe it right.

Thus he. The courſers at their maſter's threat 495
 With quicker ſteps the ſounding champain beat.
 And now Antilochus with nice ſurvey,
 Obſerves the compaſs of the hollow way.
 'Twas where by force of wintry torrents torn,
 Faſt by the road a precipice was worn : 500
 Here, where but one could paſs, to ſhun the throng
 The Spartan hero's chariot ſmoak'd along.
 Cloſe up the vent'rous youth reſolves to keep,
 Still edging near, and bears him tow'rd the ſteep.
 Atrides, trembling caſts his eye below, 505
 And wonders at the raſhneſs of his foe.
 Hold, ſtay your ſteeds—What madneſs thus to ride
 This narrow way ; take larger field (he cry'd)
 Or both muſt fall—Atrides cry'd in vain ;
 He flies more faſt, and throws up all the rein. 510
 Far as an able arm the diſk can ſend,
 When youthful rivals their full force extend,
 So far, Antilochus ! thy chariot flew
 Before the king : he cautious, backward drew

His horse compell'd ; foreboding in his fears 515
 The rattling ruin of the clashing cars,
 The sound'ring coursers rolling on the plain,
 And conquest lost thro' frantic haste to gain :
 But thus upbraids his rival as he flies ;
 Go, furious youth, ungen'rous and unwise ! 520
 Go, but expect not I'll the prize resign :
 Add perjury to fraud, and make it thine——
 Then to his steeds with all his force he cries ;
 Be swift, be vig'rous, and regain the prize !
 Your rivals, destitute of youthful force, 525
 With fainting knees shall labour in the course,
 And yield the glory yours—The steeds obey ;
 Already at their heels they wing their way,
 And seem already to retrieve the day.

Meantime the Grecians in a ring beheld 530
 The coursers bounding o'er the dusty field.
 The first who mark'd them was the Cretan king ;
 High on a rising ground, above the ring,
 The monarch sate : from whence with sure survey
 He well observ'd the chief who led the way, 535
 And heard from far his animating cries,
 And saw the foremost steed with sharpen'd eyes ;
 On whose broad front, a blaze of shining white
 Like the full moon, stood obvious to the sight.
 He saw ; and rising, to the Greeks begun. 540
 Are yonder horse discern'd by me alone ?
 Or can ye, all, another chief survey,
 And other steeds, than lately led the way ?

Those, tho' the swiftest, by some God with-held,
Lie sure disabled in the middle field: 545

For since the goal they doubled, round the plain
I search to find them, but I search in vain.
Perchance the reins forsook the driver's hand,
And, turn'd too short, he tumbled on the strand,
Shot from the chariot; while his coursers stray 550
With frantic fury from the destin'd way.

Rise then some other, and inform my sight,
(For these dim eyes, perhaps, discern not right)
Yet sure he seems, (to judge by shape and air,)
The great Ætolian chief, renown'd in war. 555

Old man! (Oileus rashly thus replies)
Thy tongue too hastily confers the prize.
Of those who view the course, not sharpest ey'd,
Nor youngest, yet the readiest to decide.
Eumelus' steeds high-bounding in the chace, 560
Still, as at first, unrivall'd lead the race:
I well discern him, as he shakes the rein,
And hear his shouts victorious o'er the plain.
Thus he. Idomeneus incens'd rejoin'd.
Barb'rous of words! and arrogant of mind! 565

ψ. 565. *The dispute between Idomeneus and Ajax.*—
Nothing could be more naturally imagined than this
contention at a horse-race: the leaders were divided
into parties, and each was interested for his friend: the
poet had a two-fold design, not only to embellish and
diversify his poem by such natural circumstances, but al-
so to shew us, as Eustathius observes, from the conduct
of Ajax, that passionate men betray themselves into

Contentious prince, of all the Greeks beside

The last in merit, as the first in pride.

To vile reproach what answer can we make?

A goblet or a tripod let us stake,

And be the king the judge. The most unwise 570

Will learn their rashness, when they pay the price.

He said: and Ajax by mad passion born,

Stern had reply'd; fierce scorn enhancing scorn

follies, and are themselves guilty of the faults of which they accuse others.

It is with a particular decency that Homer makes Achilles the arbitrator between Idomeneus and Ajax: Agamemnon was his superior in the army, but as Achilles exhibited the shows, he was the proper judge of any difference that should arise about them. Had the contest been between Ajax and Idomeneus, considered as soldiers, the cause must have been brought before Agamemnon; but as they are to be considered as spectators of the games, they ought to be determined by Achilles.

It may not be unnecessary just to observe to the reader the judiciousness of Homer's conduct in making Achilles exhibit the games, and not Agamemnon: Achilles is the hero of the poem, and consequently must be the chief actor in all the great scenes of it: he had remained inactive during a great part of the poem, yet the poet makes his very inactivity contribute to the carrying on the design of his Ilias: and to supply his absence from many of the busy scenes of the preceding parts of it, he now in the conclusion makes him almost the sole agent: by these means he leaves a noble idea of his hero upon the mind of his reader; as he raised our expectations when he brought him upon the stage of action, so he makes him go off with the utmost pomp and applause.

To fell extreams. But Thetis' god-like son
Awful amidst them rose, and thus begun. 575

Forbear, ye chiefs! reproachful to contend;
Much would ye blame, should others thus offend:
And lo! th' approaching steeds your contest end. }
No sooner had he spoke, but thund'ring near,
Drives, thro' a stream of dust, the charioteer; 580
High o'er his head the circling lash he wields;
His bounding horses scarcely touch the fields:
His car amidst the dusty whirlwind roll'd,
Bright with the mingled blaze of tin and gold,
Refulgent thro' the cloud: no eye could find 585
The track his flying wheels had left behind:
And the fierce coursers urg'd their rapid pace
So swift, it seem'd a flight, and not a race.
Now victor at the goal Tydides stands,
Quits his bright car, and springs upon the sands; 590
From the hot steeds the sweaty torrents stream;
The well-ply'd whip is hung athwart the beam:

ψ. 581. *High o'er his head the circling lash he wields.* I
I am persuaded that the common translation of the word
καταμαδόν, in the original of this verse, is faulty: it is
rendered, *he lashed the horses continually over the shoulders*;
whereas I fancy it should be translated thus, *assidue*
(*equos*) *agitabat sentica ab humero ducta*. This naturally
expresses the very action, and whirl of the whip over
the driver's shoulder, in the act of lashing the horses,
and agrees with the use of the same word in the 431st
line of this book, where *ἔρα δίαχε καταμαδίοιο* must be
translated *jactus disci ab humero vibrati*.

With joy brave Sthenelus receives the prize,
 The tripod-vase, and dame with radiant eyes :
 These to the ships his train triumphant leads, 595
 The chief himself unyokes the panting steeds.

Young Nestor follows (who by art, not force,
 O'er-past Atrides) second in the course.
 Behind, Atrides urg'd the race, more near
 Than to the courser in his swift career 600
 The following car, just touching with his heel
 And brushing with his tail the whirling wheel.
 Such, and so narrow now the space between
 The rivals, late so distant on the green ;
 So soon swift Æthe her lost ground regain'd, 605
 One length, one moment had the race obtain'd.

Merion pursu'd, at greater distance still,
 With tardier coursers, and inferior skill.
 Last came, Admetus ! thy unhappy son ;
 Slow dragg'd the steeds his batter'd chariot on : } 610
 Achilles saw, and pitying thus begun.

Behold ! the man whose matchless art surpass
 The sons of Greece ! the ablest, yet the last !
 Fortune denies, but justice bids us pay } 615
 (Since great Tydides bears the first away)
 To him, the second honours of the day.

ψ. 614. *Fortune denies, but justice, etc.*] Achilles here intends to shew, that it is not just, fortune should rule over virtue, but that a brave man who had performed his duty, and who did not bring upon himself his misfortune, ought to have the recompence he has deserved : and this principle is just, provided we do not

The Greeks consent with loud applauding cries,
 And then Eumelus had receiv'd the prize,
 But youthful Nestor, jealous of his fame,
 Th' award opposes, and asserts his claim. 620
 Think not (he cries) I tamely will resign
 O Peleus' son! the mare so justly mine.
 What if the Gods, the skilful to confound,
 Have thrown the horse and horseman to the ground!
 Perhaps he sought not heav'n by sacrifice, 625
 And vows omitted forfeited the prize.
 If yet, (distinction to thy friend to show,
 And please a soul desirous to bestow,)
 Some gift must grace Eumelus; view thy store
 Of beauteous handmaids, steeds, and shining ore, 630
 An ample present let him thence receive,
 And Greece shall praise thy gen'rous thirst to give.
 But this, my prize, I never shall forego;
 This, who but touches, warriors! is my foe.

reward him at the expence of another's right: Eumelus is a Theſſalian, and it is probable Achilles has a partiality to his countryman. Dacier.

ψ. 633. But this, my prize, I never shall forego.—
 There is an air of bravery in this discourse of Antilochus: he speaks with the generosity of a gallant soldier, and prefers his honour to his interest; he tells Achilles if he pleases he may make Eumelus a richer present than his prize; he is not concerned for the value of it; but as it was the reward of victory, he would not resign it, because that would be an acknowledgement that Eumelus deserved it.

The character of Antilochus is admirably sustained through this whole episode; he is a very sensible man,

Thus spake the youth ; nor did his words offend ; 635
 Pleas'd with the well-turn'd flatt'ry of a friend,
 Achilles smil'd: the gift propos'd (he cry'd)
 Antilochus ! we shall ourself provide.
 With plates of brass the corselet cover'd o'er,
 (The same renown'd Asteropæus wore) 640
 Whose glitt'ring margins rais'd with silver shine,
 (No vulgar gift) Eumelus, shall be thine.

He said: Automedon at his command
 The corselet brought, and gave it to his hand.
 Distinguish'd by his friend, his bosom glows 645
 With gen'rous joy: then Menelaus rose;
 The herald plac'd the sceptre in his hands,
 And still'd the clamour of the shouting bands.
 Not without cause incens'd at Nestor's son,
 And inly grieving, thus the king begun: 650

The praise of wisdom, in thy youth obtain'd,
 An act so rash (Antilochus) has stain'd.
 Robb'd of my glory and my just reward,
 To you, O Grecians ! be my wrong declar'd:
 So not a leader shall our conduct blame, 655
 Or judge me envious of a rival's fame;
 But shall not we, ourselves, the truth maintain?
 What needs appealing in a fact so plain?

but transported with youthful heat, and ambitious of glory: his rashness in driving so furiously against Menelaus must be imputed to this; but his passions being gratified by the conquest in the race, his reason again returns, he owns his error, and is full of resignation to Menelaus.

What Greek shall blame me, if I bid thee rise,
And vindicate by oath th' ill-gotten prize ? 660

Rise if thou dar'st, before thy chariot stand,
The driving scourge high-lifted in thy hand,
And touch thy steeds, and swear, thy whole intent
Was but to conquer, not to circumvent.

Swear by that God whose liquid arms surround 665
The globe, and whose dread earthquakes heave the ground.

The prudent chief with calm attention heard ;
Then mildly thus : Excuse, if youth have err'd ;
Superior as thou art, forgive th' offence,
Nor I thy equal, or in years, or sense. 670

Thou know'st the errors of unripen'd age,
Weak are its counsels, headlong is its rage.
The prize I quit, if thou thy wrath resign ;
The mare, or ought thou ask'st, be freely thine,
Ere I become (from thy dear friendship torn) 675
Hateful to thee, and to the Gods forsworn.

So spake Antilochus ; and at the word
The mare contested to the king restor'd.

ψ. 663. *And touch thy steeds, and swear——*] It is evident, says Eustathius, from hence, that all fraud was forbid in the chariot race ; but it is not very plain what unlawful deceit Antilochus used against Menelaus : perhaps Antilochus in his haste had declined from the race-ground, and avoided some of the uneven places of it, and consequently took an unfair advantage of his adversary ; or perhaps his driving so furiously against Menelaus, as to endanger both their chariots and their lives, might be reckoned foul play ; and therefore Antilochus refuses to take the oath.

Joy swells his soul, as when the vernal grain
 Lifts the green ear above the springing plain, 680
 The fields their vegetable life renew,
 And laugh and glitter with the morning dew;
 Such joy the Spartan's shining face o'er-spread
 And lifted his gay heart, while thus he said.

Still may our souls, O gen'rous youth! agree, 685
 'Tis now Atrides' turn to yield to thee.
 Rash heat perhaps a moment might controul,
 Not break, the settled temper of thy soul.
 Not but (my friend) 'tis still the wiser way
 To wave contention with superior sway; 690
 For ah! how few, who should like thee offend,
 Like thee, have talents to regain the friend?
 To plead indulgence, and thy fault atone,
 Suffice thy father's merit and thy own:

ψ. 679. Joy swells his soul, as when the vernal grain, etc.]

Eustathius is very large in the explication of this similitude, which at the first view seems obscure: his words are these:

As the dew raises the blades of corn, that are for want of it weak and depressed, and by pervading the pores of the corn animates and makes it flourish, so did the behaviour of Antilochus raise the dejected mind of Menelaus, exalt his spirits, and restore him to a full satisfaction.

I have given the reader his interpretation, and translated it with the liberty of poetry: it is very much in the language of scripture, and in the spirit of the orientals.

Gen'rous

Gen'rous alike, for me, the sire and son 695

Have greatly suffer'd, and have greatly done.

I yield; that all may know, my soul can bend,

Nor is my pride preferr'd before my friend.

He said; and pleas'd his passion to command,

Resign'd the courser to Noeman's hand, 700

Friend of the youthful chief: himself content,

The shining charger to his vessel sent.

The golden talents Merion next obtain'd;

The fifth reward, the double bowl, remain'd.

Achilles this to rev'rend Nestor bears, 705

And thus the purpose of his gift declares.

Accept thou this, O sacred fire! (he said)

In dear memorial of Patroclus dead;

Dead, and for ever lost Patroclus lies,

For ever snatch'd from our desiring eyes! 710

ψ. 707. *Accept thou this, O sacred fire!*] The poet in my opinion preserves a great deal of decency towards this old hero and venerable counsellor: he gives him an honorary reward for his superior wisdom, and therefore Achilles calls it *αἰθλον*, and not *δῶρον*, a prize, and not a present. The moral of Homer is, that princes ought no less to honour and recompence those who excel in wisdom and counsel, than those who are capable of actual service.

Achilles, perhaps, had a double view in paying him this respect, not only out of deference to his age, and wisdom, but also because he had in a manner won the prize by the advice he gave his son; so that Nestor may be said to have conquered in the person of Antilochus. Eustathius.

Take thou this token of a grateful heart,
 Tho' 'tis not thine to hurl the distant dart,
 The quoit to toss, the pond'rous mace to wield,
 Or urge the race, or wrestle on the field.
 Thy present vigour age has overthrown,
 But left the glory of the past thy own.

715

He said, and plac'd the goblet at his side;
 With joy, the venerable king reply'd.

Wisely and well, my son, thy words have prov'd
 A senior honour'd, and a friend belov'd!

720

ŷ. 719. *Nestor's speech to Achilles.*] This speech is admirably well adapted to the character of Nestor: he aggrandizes, with an infirmity peculiar to age, his own exploits; and one would think Horace had him in his eye,

——*Laudatur temporis acti*

Se puero——

Neither is it any blemish to the character of Nestor thus to be a little talkative about his own achievements: to have described him otherwise, would have been an outrage to human nature, in as much as the wisest man living is not free from the infirmities of man; and as every stage of life has some imperfection peculiar to itself.

-----"Ο μὲν ἔμπεδον ἠνιόχευεν.

-----"Εμπεδον ἠνιόχευ.

The reader may observe that the old man takes abundance of pains to give reasons how his rivals came to be victors in the chariot-race: he is very solicitous to make it appear that it was not through any want of skill or power in himself: and in my opinion Nestor is never more vain-glorious than in this recital of his own disappointment.

Too true it is, deserted of my strength,
 These wither'd arms and limbs have fail'd at length.
 Oh! had I now that force I felt of yore,
 Known thro' Buprasium and the Pylian shore!
 Victorious then in ev'ry solemn game, 725
 Ordain'd to Amaryneces' mighty name;
 The brave Epeians gáve my glory way,
 Ætolians, Pylians, all resign'd the day.

It is for the same reason he repeats the words I have cited above: he obtrudes (by that repetition) the disadvantages under which he laboured, upon the observation of the reader, for fear he should impute the loss of the victory to his want of skill.

Nestor says that these Moliones overpowered him by their *number*. The critics, as Eustathius remarks, have laboured hard to explain this difficulty; they tell us a formal story, that when Nestor was ready to enter the lists against these brothers, he objected against them as unfair adversaries, (for it must be remembered that they were monsters that grew together, and consequently had four hands to Nestor's two) but the judges would not allow his plea, but determined, that as they grew together, so they ought to be considered as one man.

Others tells us that they brought several chariots into the lists, whose charioteers combined together in favour of Eurytus and Cteatus, these brother-monsters.

Others say, that the multitude of the spectators conspired to disappoint Nestor.

I thought it necessary to give my reader these several conjectures that he might understand why Nestor says he was overpowered by *πλῆθει*, or *numbers*; and also, because it confirms my former observation, that Nestor is very careful to draw his own picture in the strongest colours, and to shew it in the fairest light.

I quell'd Clytomedes in fights of hand,
 And backward hurl'd Ancæus on the sand, 730
 Surpass'd Iphycus in the swift career,
 Phyleus and Polydorus, with the spear.
 The sons of Actor won the prize of horse,
 But won by numbers, not by art or force:
 For the fam'd twins, impatient to survey, 735
 Prize after prize by Nestor born away,
 Sprung to their car; and with united pains
 One lash'd the courfers, while one rul'd the reins.
 Such once I was! now to these tasks succeeds
 A younger race, that emulate our deeds: 740
 I yield alas! (to age who must not yield?)
 Tho' once the foremost hero of the field.
 Go thou! my son! by gen'rous friendship led,
 With martial honours decorate the dead;
 While pleas'd I take the gift thy hands present, 745
 (Pledge of benevolence, and kind intent)
 Rejoic'd, of all the num'rous Greeks, to see
 Not one but honours sacred age and me:
 Those due distinctions thou so well can'st pay,
 May the just Gods return another day. 750

Proud of the gift, thus spake the full of days:
 Achilles heard him, prouder of the praise.

The prizes next are ordered to the field,
 For the bold champions who the Cæstus wield.
 A stately mule, as yet by toils unbroke, 755
 Of six years age, unconscious of the yoke,

Is to the Circus led, and firmly bound;
 Next stands a goblet, massy, large and round.
 Achilles rising thus: Let Greece excite
 Two heroes equal to this hardy fight; 760
 Who dares his foe with lifted arms provoke,
 And rush beneath the long-descending stroke?
 On whom Apollo shall the palm bestow,
 And whom the Greeks supreme by conquest know,
 This mule his dauntless labour shall repay; 765
 The vanquish'd bear the massy bowl away.

This dreadful combat great Epeus chose,
 High o'er the croud, enormous bulk! he rose,
 And seiz'd the beast, and thus began to say:
 Stand forth some man, to bear the bowl away! 770
 (Price of his ruin :) for who dares deny
 This mule my right? th' undoubted victor I.
 Others, 'tis own'd, in fields of battle shine,
 But the first honours of this fight are mine;
 For who excels in all? Then let my foe 775
 Draw near, but first his certain fortune know,
 Secure, this hand shall his whole frame confound,
 Mash all his bones, and all his body pound:
 So let his friends be nigh, a needful train
 To heave the batter'd carcase off the plain. 780

The giant spoke; and in a stupid gaze
 The host beheld him, silent with amaze!
 'Twas thou, Euryalus! who durst aspire
 To meet his might, and emulate thy fire,

The great Mecistheus; who in days of yore • 785
 In Theban games the noblest trophy bore,
 (The games ordain'd dead Oedipus to grace)
 And singly vanquish'd the Cadmean race.
 Him great Tydides urges to contend,
 Warm with the hopes of conquest for his friend, 790
 Officious with the cincture girds him round;
 And to his wrist the gloves of death are bound.
 Amid the circle now each champion stands,
 And poises high in air his iron hands;
 With clashing ganilets now they fiercely close, } 795
 Their crackling jaws re-echo to the blows,
 And painful sweat from all their members flows. }
 At length Epeus dealt a weighty blow,
 Full on the cheek of his unwary foe;
 Beneath that pond'rous arm's resistless sway 800
 Down dropt he, nerveless, and extended lay.
 As a large fish, when winds and waters rore,
 By some huge billow dash'd against the shore,
 Lies panting: not less batter'd with his wound,
 The bleeding hero pants upon the ground. 805
 To rear his fallen foe, the victor lends,
 Scornful, his hand; and gives him to his friends;
 Whose arms support him, reeling thro' the throng,
 And dragging his disabled legs along;
 Nodding, his head hangs down his shoulder o'er; 810
 His mouth and nostrils pour the clotted gore;
 Wrapt round in mists he lies, and lost to thought;
 His friends receive the bowl, too dearly bought.

The third bold game Achilles next demands,
 And calls the wrestlers to the level sands : 815
 A massy tripod for the victor lies,
 Of twice six oxen its reputed price ;
 And next, the losers spirits to restore,
 A female captive, valu'd but at four.
 Scarce did the chief the vig'rous strife propose, 820
 When tow'r-like Ajax and Ulysses rose.
 Amid the ring each nervous rival stands,
 Embracing rigid with implicit hands :
 Close lock'd above, their heads and arms are mixt ;
 Below, their planted feet, at distance fixt : 825
 Like two strong rafters which the builder forms
 Proof to the wintry wind and howling storms,

ψ. 819. *A female captive, valu'd but at four.*] I cannot in civility neglect a remark made upon this passage by Madam Dacier, who highly resents the affront put upon her sex by the ancients, who set (it seems) thrice the value upon a Tripod as upon a beautiful female slave: nay, she is afraid the value of women is not raised even in our days; for she says there are curious persons now living, who had rather have a true antique kettle, than the finest woman alive: I confess I intirely agree with the lady, and must impute such opinions of the fair sex to want of taste in both ancients and moderns: the reader may remember that these tripods were of no use, but made intirely for show; and consequently the most satirical critic could only say, the woman and Tripod ought to have born an equal value.

ψ. 826. *Like two strong rafters, etc.*] I will give the reader the words of Eustathius upon this similitude, which very happily represents the wrestlers in the posture of wrestling. Their heads leaned one against the

Their tops connected, but at wider space

Fixt on the centre stands their solid base.

Now to the grasp each manly body bends; 830

The humid sweat from ev'ry pore descends;

Their bones resound with blows: sides, shoulders, thighs,

Swell to each gripe, and bloody tumours rise.

Nor could Ulysses, for his art renown'd,

O'erturn the strength of Ajax on the ground; 835

Nor could the strength of Ajax overthrow

The watchful caution of his artful foe.

While the long strife ev'n tir'd the lookers-on,

Thus to Ulysses spoke great Telamon.

Or let me lift thee, chief, or lift thou me: 840

Prove we our force, and Jove the rest decree.

He said; and straining, heav'd him off the ground

With matchless strength; that time Ulysses found

The strength t' evade, and where the nerves combine

His ankle strook: the giant fell supine; 845

Ulysses following, on his bosom lies;

Shouts of applause run ratt'ling thro' the skies.

Ajax to lift, Ulysses next essays,

He barely stirr'd him, but he could not raise:

other, like the rafters that support the roof of a house: at the foot they are disjoined, and stand at a greater distance, which naturally paints the attitude of body in these two wrestlers, while they contend for victory.

ψ. 849. *He barely stirr'd him, but he could not raise.*] The poet by this circumstance excellently maintains the character of Ajax, who has all along been described as a strong, unwieldy warrior: he is so heavy, that Ulysses

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His knee look'd fast, the foe's attempt deny'd; 850

And grappling close, they tumbled side by side.

Defil'd with honourable dust, they roll

Still breathing strife, and unsubdu'd of soul:

Again they rage, again to combat rise;

When great Achilles thus divides the prize. 855

Your nobler vigour, oh my friends, restrain;

Nor weary out your gen'rous strength in vain.

Ye both have won: let others who excel,

Now prove that prowess you have prov'd so well.

The hero's words the willing chiefs obey, } 860

From their tir'd bodies wipe the dust away, }

And, cloath'd anew, the following games survey. }

And now succeed the gifts, ordain'd to grace

The youths contending in the rapid race.

A silver urn that full six measures held, 865

By none in weight or workmanship excell'd:

can scarce lift him. The words that follow will bear a different meaning, either that Ajax locked his leg with-in that of Ulysses, or that Ulysses did it. Eustathius observes, that if Ajax gave Ulysses this shook, then he may be allowed to have some appearance of an equality in the contest; but if Ulysses gave it, than Ajax must be acknowledged to have been foiled: but (continues he) it appeared to be otherwise to Achilles, who was the judge of the field, and therefore he gives them an equal prize, because they were equal in the contest.

Madam Dacier misrepresents Eustathius on this place, in saying he thinks it was Ulysses who gave the second stroke to Ajax, whereas it appears by the foregoing note that he rather determines otherwise in consent with the judgment given by Achilles.

Sidonian artists taught the frame to shine,

Elaborate, with artifice divine;

Whence Tyrian sailors did the prize transport,

And gave to Thoas at the Lemnian port:

From him descended good Eunæus heir'd

The glorious gift; and, for Lycaon spar'd,

To brave Patroclus gave the rich reward.

Now, the same hero's fun'ral rites to grace,

It stands the prize of swiftness in the race.

A well-fed ox was for the second plac'd;

And half a talent must content the last.

Achilles rising then bespoke the train:

Who hope the palm of swiftness to obtain,

Stand forth, and bear these prizes from the plain.

The hero said, and starting from his place,

Oilean Ajax rises to the race;

Ulysses next; and he whose speed surpass

His youthful equals, Nestor's son the last.

Rang'd in a line the ready racers stand;

Pelides points the barrier with his hand;

All start at once; Oileus led the race;

The next Ulysses, meas'ring pace with pace;

Behind him, diligently close, he sped,

As closely following as the running thread

The spindle follows, and displays the charms

Of the fair spinster's breast, and moving arms:

Graceful in motion thus, his foe he plies,

And treads each footstep ere the dust can rise:

His glowing breath upon his shoulders plays; 895

Th' admiring Greeks loud acclamations raise,

To him they give their wishes, hearts, and eyes,

And send their souls before him as he flies.

Now three times turn'd in prospect of the goal,

The panting chief to Pallas lifts his soul: 900

Assist, O Goddess! (thus in thought he pray'd)

And present at his thought, descends the maid.

Buoy'd by her heav'nly force, he seems to swim,

And feels a pinion lifting ev'ry limb.

All fierce, and ready now the prize to gain, 905

Unhappy Ajax stumbles on the plain;

(O'erturn'd by Pallas) where the slipp'ry shore

Was clogg'd with slimy dung, and mingled gore.

(The self-same place beside Patroclus' pyre,

Where late the slaughter'd victims fed the fire) 910

Besmeared with filth, and blotted o'er with clay,

Obscene to sight, the rueful racer lay;

The well-fed bull (the second prize) he shar'd,

And left the urn Ulysses' rich reward.

γ. 901. *Assist, O Goddess! (thus in thought he pray'd.)*] Nothing could be better adapted to the present circumstances of Ulysses than this prayer: it is short, and ought to be so, because the time would not allow him to make a longer: nay he prefers this petition mentally, ἐν καρδίᾳ θυμῷ; all his faculties are so bent upon the race, that he does not call off his attention from it, even to speak so short a petition as seven words, which comprehend the whole of it: such passages as these are instances of great judgment in the poet.

Then, grasping by the horn the mighty beast, 915
The baffled hero thus the Greeks address.

Accursed fate! the conquest I forego;
A mortal I, a Goddess was my foe;
She urg'd her fav'rite on the rapid way,
And Pallas, not Ulysses, won the day. 920

Thus sourly wail'd he, spurr'd dirt and gore,
A burst of laughter echo'd thro' the shore.
Antilochus, more hum'rous than the rest,
Takes the last prize, and takes it with a jest.

Why with our wiser elders should we strive? 925
The Gods still love them, and they always thrive.
Ye see, to Ajax I must yield the prize:
He to Ulysses, still more aged and wise;
(A green old age unconscious of decays,
That proves the hero born in better days!) 930
Behold his vigour in this active race!
Achilles only boasts a swifter pace:
For who can match Achilles? He who can,
Must yet be more than hero, more than man.

ψ. 924. *And takes it with a jest.*] Antilochus comes off very well, and wittily prevents raillery; by attributing the victory of his rivals to the protection which the gods gave to age. By this he insinuates, that he has something to comfort himself with; (for youth is better than the prize) and that he may pretend hereafter to the same protection, since it is a privilege of seniority. Dacier.

ψ. 933. *For who can match Achilles?*] There is great art in these transient complements to Achilles: that hero could not possibly shew his own superiority in

Th' effect succeeds the speech. Pelides cries, 935

Thy artful praise deserves a better prize.

Nor Greece in vain shall hear thy friend extoll'd;

Receive a talent of the purest gold.

The youth departs content. The host admire

The son of Nestor, worthy of his fire. 940

Next these a buckler, spear and helm, he brings,

Cast on the plain the brazen burthen rings:

Arms, which of late divine Sarpedon wore,

And great Patroclus in short triumph bore.

Stand forth the bravest of our host! (he cries) 945

Whoever dares deserve so rich a prize,

Now grace the lists before our army's fight,

And sheath'd in steel, provoke his foe to fight.

Who first the jointed armour shall explore,

And stain his rival's mail with issuing gore; 950

in these games by contending for any of the prizes, because he was the exhibiter of the sports: but Homer has found out a way to give him the victory in two of them. In the chariot-race Achilles is represented as being able to conquer every opponent, and though he speaks it himself, the poet brings it in so happily, that he speaks it without any indecency: and in this place Antilochus with a very good grace tells Achilles, that in the foot-race no one can dispute the prize with him. Thus though Diomed and Ulysses conquer in the chariot and foot-race, it is only because Achilles is not their antagonist.

ψ. 949. *Who first the jointed armour shall explore.*]

Some of the ancients have been shocked at this combate, thinking it a barbarity that men in sport should thus

The sword, Asteropus possess of old,
 (A Thracian blade, distinct with studs of gold)
 Shall pay the stroke, and grace the striker's side:
 These arms in common let the chief divide:
 For each brave champion, when the combat ends, 955
 A sumptuous banquet at our tent attends.

Fierce at the word, uprose great Tydeus' son,
 And the huge bulk of Ajax Telamon.
 Clad in refulgent steel, on either hand,
 The dreadful chiefs amid the circle stand: 960
 Low'ring they meet, tremendous to the sight;
 Each Argive bosom beats with fierce delight.
 Oppos'd in arms not long they idly stood,
 But thrice they clos'd, and thrice the charge renew'd.
 A furious pass the spear of Ajax made 965
 Thro' the broad shield, but at the corslet stay'd:

contend for their lives; and therefore Aristophanes the
 grammarian made this alteration in the verses.

Ὅπότερός κεν πρῶτος ἐπιγράφας χροῖα καλὸν
 Φθῆη ἐπευξάμενος διὰ δ' ἔντεα, etc.

But it is evident that they intirely mistook the meaning
 and intention of Achilles; for he that gave the first
 wound was to be accounted the victor. How could
 Achilles promise to entertain them both in his tent after
 the combat, if he intended that one of them should
 fall in it? This duel therefore was only a trial of skill,
 and as such single combats were frequent in the wars of
 those ages against adversaries, so this was proposed only
 to shew the dexterity of the combatants in that exercise.
 Eustathius.

Not thus the foe: his jav'lin aim'd above
 The buckler's margin, at the neck he drove.
 But Greece now trembling for her hero's life,
 Bade share the honours, and surcease the strife. 970
 Yet still the victor's due Tydides gains,
 With him the sword and studded belt remains.

Then hurl'd the hero, thund'ring on the ground
 A mass of iron, (an enormous round)
 Whose weight and size the circling Greeks admire, 975
 Rude from the furnace, and but shap'd by fire.
 This mighty quoit Action wont to rear,
 And from his whirling arm dismiss in air:
 The giant by Achilles slain, he stow'd
 Among his spoils this memorable load. 980

*. 971. *Yet still the victor's due Tydides gains.*] Achilles in this place acts the part of a very just arbitrator: though the combat did not proceed to a full issue, yet Diomed had evidently the advantage, and consequently ought to be rewarded as victor, because he would have been victorious, had not the Greeks interposed.

I could have wished that the poet had given Ajax the prize in some of these contests. He undoubtedly was a very gallant soldier, and has been described as repulsing a whole army: yet in all these sports he is foiled. But perhaps the poet had a double view in this representation, not only to shew, that strength without conduct is usually unsuccessful, but also his design might be to complement the Greeks his countrymen; by shewing that this Ajax, who had repelled a whole army of Trojans, was not able to conquer any one of the Grecian worthies: for we find him overpowered in three of these exercises.

For this, he bids those nervous artists vie,
 That teach the disk to sound along the sky.
 Let him whose might can hurl this bowl, arise,
 Who farthest hurls it, take it as his prize:
 If he be one, inrich'd with large domain 985
 Of downs for flocks, and arable for grain,
 Small stock of iron needs that man provide;
 His hinds and swains whole years shall be supply'd
 From hence: nor ask the neighb'ring city's aid,
 For plowshares, wheels, and all the rural trade. 990
 Stern Polypætes stept before the throng;
 And great Leonteus, more than mortal strong;
 Whose force with rival forces to oppose,
 Uprose great Ajax; up Epeus rose.
 Each stood in order: first Epeus threw; 995
 High o'er the wond'ring crouds the whirling circle flew.

v. 985. *If he be one inrich'd, etc.*] The poet in this place speaks in the simplicity of ancient times: the prodigious weight and size of the quoit is described with a noble plainness, peculiar to the oriental way, and agreeable to the manners of those heroic ages. He does not set down the quantity of this enormous piece of iron, neither as to its bigness nor weight, but as to the use it will be of to him who shall gain it. We see from hence, that the ancients in the prizes they proposed, had in view not only the honourable, but the useful; a captive for work, a bull for tillage, a quoit for the provision of iron. Besides, it must be remembered, that in those times iron was very scarce; and a sure sign of this scarcity, is, that their arms were brass. Eustathius. Dacier.

Leonteus next a little space surpast,
 And third, the strength of god-like Ajax cast.
 O'er both their marks it flew; 'till fiercely flung
 From Polypoetes' arm, the Discus sung: 1000

Far, as a swain his whirling sheephook throws,
 That distant falls among the grazing cows,
 So past them all the rapid circle flies:

His friends (while loud applauses shake the skies) }
 With force conjoin'd heave off the weighty prize. } 1005

Those, who in skilful archery contend,
 He next invites the twanging bow to bend:
 And twice ten axes casts amidst the round,
 (Ten double-edg'd, and ten that singly wound.)
 The mast, which late a first-rate galley bore, 1010
 The hero fixes in the sandy shore:

To the tall top a milk-white dove they tie,
 The trembling mark at which their arrows fly.
 Whose weapon strikes yon' flutt'ring bird, shall bear
 These two-edg'd axes, terrible in war; 1015

The single, he, whose shaft divides the cord.
 He said: experienc'd Merion took the word;
 And skilful Teucer: in the helm they threw
 Their lots inscrib'd, and forth the latter flew.

Swift from the string the sounding arrow flies; 1020
 But flies unblest! no grateful sacrifice;

No firstling lambs, unheedful! didst thou vow
 To Phœbus, patron of the shaft and bow.

For this, thy well-aim'd arrow, turn'd aside;
 Err'd from the dove, yet cut the cord that ty'd: 1025

A-down the main-mast fell the parted string,
 And the free bird to heav'n displays her wing:
 Seas, shores, and skies with loud applause resound,
 And Merion eager meditates the wound:
 He takes the bow, directs the shaft above, 1030
 And following with his eye the soaring dove,

ψ. 1030. *He takes the bow.*] There having been many editions of Homer, that of Marseilles represents these two rivals in archery as using two bows in the contest; and reads the verses thus,

Σπερχόμενος δ' ἄρα Μηριόνης ἐπέθη κατ' ὄϊσόν
 Τόξω ἐν γὰρ χερσὶν ἔχε πάλα, ὥς ἴθυνεν.

Our common editions follow the better alteration of Antimachus, with this only difference, that he reads it

Ἐξείρυσσε τεύχεα τόξον. And they, Ὑξείρυσσε χεῖρὸς τόξον.

It is evident that these archers had but one bow, as they that threw the quoit had but one quoit; by these means the one had no advantage over the other, because both of them shot with the same bow. So that the common reading is undoubtedly the best, where the lines stand thus,

Σπερχόμενος δ' ἄρα Μηριόνης ἐξείρυσσε χεῖρὸς or Τεύχεα
 Τόξον, ἀτὰρ δὴ ὄϊσόν ἔχε παλαι ὥς ἴθυνεν. Eustathius.

This Teucer is the most eminent man for archery of any through the whole Iliad, yet he is here excelled by Meriones: and the poet ascribes his miscarriages to the neglect of invoking Apollo, the God of archery; whereas Meriones, who invokes him, is crowned with success. There is an excellent moral in this passage, and the poet would teach us, that without addressing to heaven we cannot succeed: Meriones does not conquer because he is the better archer, but because he is the better man.

Implores the God to speed it thro' the skies,
 With vows of firstling lambs, and grateful sacrifice.
 The dove, in airy circles as she wheels,
 Amid the clouds the piercing arrow feels; 1035
 Quite thro' and thro' the point its passage found,
 And at his feet fell bloody to the ground.
 The wounded bird, ere yet she breath'd her last,
 With flapping wings alighted on the mast,
 A moment hung, and spread her pinions there, 1040
 Then sudden dropt, and left her life in air.
 From the pleas'd croud new peals of thunder rise,
 And to the ships brave Merion bears the prize.

To close the fun'ral games, Achilles last
 A massy spear amid the circle plac'd, 1045
 And ample charger of un sullied frame,
 With flow'rs high-wrought, not blacken'd yet by flame.
 For these he bids the heroes prove their art,
 Whose dextrous skill directs the flying dart.
 Here too great Merion hopes the noble prize; 1050
 Nor here disdain'd the king of men to rise.

ψ. 1051. *Nor here disdain'd the king of men to rise.*]
 There is an admirable conduct in this passage; Agamemnon never contended for any of the former prizes, though of much greater value; so that he is a candidate for this, only to honour Patroclus and Achilles. The decency which the poet uses both in the choice of the game, in which Agamemnon is about to contend, and the giving him the prize without a contest, is very remarkable: the game was a warlike exercise, fit for the general of an army; the giving him the prize without a contest is a decency judiciously observed, because no

With joy Pelides saw the honour paid,
Rose to the monarch, and respectful said.

Thee first in virtue, as in pow'r supreme,
O king of nations! all thy Greeks proclaim; 1055
In ev'ry martial game thy worth attest,
And know thee both their greatest, and their best.
Take then the prize, but let brave Merion bear
This beamy jav'lin in thy brother's war.

Pleas'd from the hero's lips his praise to hear, 1060
The king to Merion gives the brazen spear:
But, set apart for sacred use, commands
The glitt'ring charger to Talthybius' hands,

one ought to be supposed to excel the general in any military art: Agamemnon does justice to his own character; for whereas he had been represented by Achilles in the opening of the poem as a covetous person, he now puts in for the prize that is of the least value, and generously gives even that to Talthybius. Eustathius.

As to this last particular, of Agamemnon's presenting the charger to Talthybius, I cannot but be of a different opinion. It had been an affront to Achilles not to have accepted of his present on this occasion, and I believe the words of Homer,

Ταλθυβίῳ κήρυκι δίδω περικαλλῆς ἄεθλον,

mean no more, than that he put it into the hands of this herald to carry it to his ships; Talthybius being by his office an attendant upon Agamemnon.

IT will be expected I should here say something tending to a comparison between the games of Homer and those of Virgil. If I may own my private opinion, there is in general more variety of natural incidents, and a more lively picture of natural passions, in the games and persons of Homer. On the other hand, there seems to me more art, contrivance, gradation, and a greater pomp of verse in those of Virgil. The *chariot-race* is that which Homer has most laboured, of which Virgil being sensible, he judiciously avoided the imitation of what he could not improve, and substituted in its place the *naval course*, or *ship-race*. It is in this the Roman poet has employed all his force, as if on set purpose to rival his great master; but it is extremely observable how constantly he keeps Homer in his eye, and is afraid to depart from his very track, even when he had varied the subject itself. Accordingly the accidents of the naval course have a strange resemblance with those of Homer's chariot-race. He could not forbear at the very beginning to draw a part of that description into a simile. Do not we see he has Homer's chariots in his head, by these lines;

*Non tam præcípites bijugo certamine campum
Corripuere, ruuntque effusi carcere currus.
Nec sic immixtis aurigæ undantia lora
Concussere jugis, pronique in verbera pendent.*

Æn. v. v. 144.

What is the encounter of Cloanthus and Gyas in the strait between the rocks, but the same with that of Menelaus and Antilochus in the hollow way? Had the galley of Sergestus been broken, if the chariot of Eumelus had not been demolished? Or Mnestheus been cast from the helm, had not the other been thrown from his seat? Does not Mnestheus exhort his rowers in the very words Antilochus had used to his horses?

*Non jam prima peto Mnestheus, neque vincere certo.
Quamquam O! sed superent quibus hoc Neptune dedisti:*

*Extremos pudeat rediisse! hoc vincite, cives,
Et prohibete nefas——*

*Εμβητον, καὶ σφῶϊ τιταίνεται ὅτι τάχιστα.

*Ἡ τοι μὲν κείνοισιν ἐριζέμεν ἔτι κελεύω

Τυδείδῳ ἵπποισι δαΐφρονος, οἷσιν Ἀθήνη

Νῦν ᾠρεξε τάχος-----

*Ἴππυς δ' Ἀτρεΐδαο κιχάνετε, μηδὲ λίπησθον,

Καρπαλίμας, μὴ σφῶιν ἐλεγκείην καταχεύη

*Αἶθῃ θῆλυς ἔῤυσα-----

Upon the whole, the description of the sea-race I think has the more poetry and majesty, that of the chariots more nature and lively incidents. There is nothing in Virgil so picturesque, so animated, or which so much marks the characters, as the episodes of Antilochus and Menelaus, Ajax and Idomeneus, with that beautiful interposition of old Nestor, (so naturally introduced into an affair where one so little expects him.) On the other side, in Virgil the description itself is nobler; it has something more ostentatiously grand, and seems a spectacle more worthy the presence of princes and great persons.

In three other games we find the Roman poet contending openly with the Grecian. That of the Cæstus is in great part a verbal translation: but it must be owned in favour of Virgil, that he has varied from Homer in the event of the combat with admirable judgment and with an improvement of the moral. Epeus and Dares are described by both poets as vain boasters; but Virgil with more poetical justice punishes Dares for his arrogance, whereas the presumption and pride of Epeus is rewarded by Homer.

On the contrary, in the *foot-race*, I am of opinion, that Homer has shewn more judgment and morality than Virgil. Nisus in the latter is unjust to his adversary in favour of his friend Euryalus; so that Euryalus wins the race by a palpable fraud, and yet the poet gives him the first prize; whereas Homer makes Ulysses victorious,

purely through the mischance of Ajax, and his own piety in invoking Minerva.

The *shooting* is also a direct copy, but with the addition of two circumstances which make a beautiful gradation. In Homer the first archer cuts the string that held the bird, and the other shoots him as he is mounting. In Virgil the first only hits the mast which the bird was fixed upon, the second cuts the string, the third shoots him, and the fourth to vaunt the strength of his arm directs his arrow up to heaven, where it kindles into a flame, and makes a prodigy. This last is certainly superior to Homer in what they call the *wonderful*: but what is the *intent* or *effect* of this prodigy, or whether a reader is not at least as much surprized at it, as at the most unreasonable parts in Homer, I leave to those critics who are more inclined to find faults than I am: nor shall I observe upon the many literal imitations in the Roman poet, to object against which were to derogate from the merit of those fine passages, which Virgil was so very sensible of, that he was resolved to take them, at any rate, to himself.

There remain in Homer three games untouched by Virgil; the *wrestling*, the *combate*, and the Discus. In Virgil there is only the Lusus Trojæ added, which is purely his own, and must be confest to be inimitable: I do not know whether I may be allowed to say, it is worth all those three of Homer?

I could not forgive myself if I omitted to mention in this place the funeral games in the sixth Thebaid of Statius; it is by much the most beautiful book of that poem. It is very remarkable, that he has followed Homer through the whole course of his games: there is the *chariot-race*, the *foot-race*, the Discus, the Cæstus, the *wrestling*, the *single combat* (which is put off in the same manner as in Homer) and the *shooting*; which last ends (as in Virgil) with a prodigy: yet in the particular descriptions of each of these games this poet has not borrowed from either of his predecessors, and his poem is so much the worse for it.

...

T H E
I L I A D.
B O O K XXIV.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The redemption of the body of Hector.

THE Gods deliberate about the redemption of Hector's body. Jupiter sends Thetis to Achilles to dispose him for the restoring it, and Iris to Priam, to encourage him to go in person, and treat for it. The old king, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his queen, makes ready for the journey, to which he is encouraged by an omen from Jupiter. He sets forth in his chariot, with a waggon loaded with presents under the charge of Idaeus the herald. Mercury descends in the shape of a young man, and conducts him to the pavilion of Achilles. Their conversation on the way. Priam finds Achilles at his table, casts himself at his feet, and begs for the body of his son; Achilles, moved with compassion, grants his request, detains him one night in his tent, and the next morning sends him home with the body: the Trojans run out to meet him. The lamentations of Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen, with the solemnities of the funeral.

The time of twelve days is employed in this book, while the body of Hector lies in the tent of Achilles. And as many more are spent in the truce allowed for his interment. The scene is partly in Achilles's camp, and partly in Troy.

NOW from the finish'd games the Grecian band
Seek their black ships, and clear the crouded strand;

All stretch'd at ease the genial banquet share,
 And pleasing slumbers quiet all their care.
 Not so Achilles: he, to grief resign'd, 5
 His friend's dear image present to his mind,
 Takes his sad couch, more unobserv'd to weep,
 Nor tastes the gifts of all-composing sleep.
 Restless he roll'd around his weary bed,
 And all his soul on his Patroclus fed: 10
 The form so pleasing, and the heart so kind,
 That youthful vigour, and that manly mind,
 What toils they shar'd, what martial works they wrought,
 What seas they measur'd, and what fields they fought;

ψ. 14. What seas they measur'd, etc.] There is something very noble in these sentiments of Achilles: he does not recollect any soft moments, any tenderesses that had passed between him and Patroclus, but he resolves the many difficulties, the toils by land, and the dangers by sea, in which they had been companions: thus the poet on all occasions admirably sustains the character of Achilles; when he played upon the harp in the ninth book, he sung the achievements of kings; and in this place there is an air of greatness in his very sorrows: Achilles is as much a hero when he weeps, as when he fights.

This passage in Homer has not escaped the censure of Plato, who thought it a diminution to his character to be thus transported with grief; but the objection will vanish, if we remember that all the passions of Achilles are in the extreme; his nature is violent, and it would have been an outrage to his general character to have represented him as mourning moderately for his friend. Plato spoke more like a philosopher than a critic when he blamed the behaviour of Achilles as unmanly: these

All past before him in remembrance dear, 15

Thought follows thought, and tear succeeds to tear.

And now supine, now prone, the hero lay,

Now shifts his side, impatient for the day:

'Then starting up, disconsolate he goes

Wide on the lonely beach to vent his woes. 20

There as the solitary mourner raves,

The ruddy morning rises o'er the waves:

Soon as it rose, his furious steeds he join'd;

The chariot flies, and Hector trails behind.

And thrice Patroclus! round thy monument 25

Was Hector dragg'd, then hurry'd to the tent.

There sleep at last o'ercomes the hero's eyes:

While foul in dust th' unhonour'd carcase lies,

But not deserted by the pitying skies. }

For Phœbus watch'd it with superior care, 30

Preserv'd from gaping wounds, and tainting air;

tears would have ill become Plato, but they are graceful in Achilles.

Besides, there is something very instructive in this whole representation, it shews us the power of a sincere friendship, and softens and recommends the character of Achilles; the violence he used towards his enemy is alleviated by the sincerity he expresses towards his friend; he is a terrible enemy, but amiable friend.

ψ. 30. *For Phœbus watch'd it, etc.*] Eustathius says, that by this shield of Apollo are meant the clouds that are drawn up by the beams of the sun, which cooling and qualifying the sultriness of the air, preserved the body from decay: but perhaps the poet had something farther in his eye when he introduced Apollo upon this occasion: Apollo is a physician and the God of medi-

And ignominious as it swept the field,
 Spread o'er the sacred corse his golden shield.
 All heav'n was mov'd, and Hermes will'd to go
 By stealth to snatch him from th' insulting foe : 35
 But Neptune this, and Pallas this denies,
 And th' unrelenting empress of the skies :

cements; if therefore Achilles used any arts to preserve Hector from decay, that he might be able the longer to insult his remains, Apollo may properly be said to protect it with his Ægis.

ψ. 36. *But Neptune this, and Pallas this denies.*] It is with excellent art that the poet carries on this part of the poem: he shews that he could have contrived another way to recover the body of Hector, but as a God is never to be introduced but when human means fail, he rejects the interposition of Mercury, makes use of ordinary methods, and Priam redeems his son: this gives an air of probability to the relation, at the same time that it advances the glory of Achilles; for the greatest of his enemies labours to purchase his favour, the gods hold a consultation, and a king becomes his suppliant. Eustathius.

Those seven lines, from κλέψαι δ' ὠτρύνεσκον to Μαχλοσύνην ἀλεγεινήν, have been thought spurious by some of the ancients: they judged it as an indecency that the goddess of wisdom and Achilles should be equally inexorable; and that it was below the majesty of the gods to be said to steal. Besides, say they, had Homer been acquainted with the judgment of Paris, he would undoubtedly have mentioned it before this time in his poem, and consequently that story was of a later invention: and Aristarchus affirms that Μαχλοσύνη is a more modern word, and never known before the time of Hesiod, who uses it when he speaks of the daughters of Prætus; and adds, that it is appropriated to signify the

E'er since that day implacable to Troy,
 What time young Paris, simple shepherd boy,
 Won by destructive lust (reward obscene) 40
 Their charms rejected for the Cyprian queen.
 But when the tenth celestial morning broke;
 To heav'n assembled, thus Apollo spoke.

Unpitying pow'rs! how oft each holy fane
 Has Hector ting'd with blood of victims slain? 45

incontinence of women, and cannot be at all applied to
 men: therefore others read the last verse,

*Η οἱ κεχαρισμένα δῶρ' ὀνόμηνε.

These objections are entirely gathered from Eustathius;
 to which we may add, that Macrobius seems to have
 been one of those who rejected these verses, since he af-
 firms that our author never mentions the judgment of
 Paris. It may be answered, that the silence of Homer
 in the foregoing part of the poem, as to the judgment
 of Paris, is no argument that he was ignorant of that
 story: perhaps he might think it most proper to unfold
 the cause of the destruction of Troy in the conclusion of
 the Ilias; that the reader seeing the wrong done, and
 the punishment of that wrong immediately following,
 might acknowledge the justice of it.

The same reason will be an answer to the objection
 relating to the anger of Pallas: Wisdom cannot be sa-
 tisfied without justice, and consequently Pallas ought
 not to cease from resentment, till Troy has suffered the
 deserts of her crimes.

I cannot think that the objection about the word
Μαχλόςυνη is of any weight; the date of words is utterly
 uncertain, and as no one has been able to determine the
 ages of Homer and Hesiod, so neither can any person
 be assured that such words were not in use in Homer's
 days.

And can ye still his cold remains pursue?
 Still grudge his body to the Trojans view?
 Deny to consort, mother, son, and fire,
 The last sad honours of a fun'ral fire?
 Is then the dire Achilles all your care? 50
 That iron heart, inflexibly severe;
 A lion, not a man, who slaughters wide
 In strength of rage and impotence of pride,
 Who hastes to murder with a savage joy,
 Invades around, and breathes but to destroy. 55
 Shame is not of his soul; nor understood,
 The greatest evil and the greatest good.
 Still for one loss he rages unresign'd,
 Repugnant to the lot of all mankind;
 To lose a friend, a brother, or a son, 60
 Heav'n dooms each mortal, and its will is done:
 A while they sorrow, then dismiss their care;
 Fate gives the wound, and man is born to bear.
 But this insatiate the commission giv'n
 By fate, exceeds; and tempts the wrath of heav'n: 65

ψ. 52. *A lion, not a man, etc.*] This is a very formal condemnation of the morals of Achilles, which Homer puts into the mouth of a God. One may see from this alone that he was far from designing his hero a virtuous character; yet the poet artfully introduces Apollo in the midst of his reproaches, intermingling the hero's praises with his blemishes: *Brave though he be*, etc. Thus what is the real merit of Achilles is distinguished from what is blameable in his character, and we see Apollo or the God of wisdom, is no less impartial than just in his representation of Achilles.

Lo how his rage dishonest drags along
 Hector's dead earth insensible of wrong !
 Brave tho' he be, yet by no reason aw'd,
 He violates the laws of man and God.

If equal honours by the partial skies 70
 Are doom'd both heroes, (Juno thus replies)
 If Thetis' son must no distinction know,
 Then hear, ye Gods ! the patron of the bow.
 But Hector only boasts a mortal claim ;
 His birth deriving from a mortal dame : 75
 Achilles of your own æthereal race
 Springs from a Goddess by a man's embrace ;
 (A Goddess by our self to Peleus giv'n,
 A man divine, and chosen friend of heav'n.)
 To grace those nuptials, from the bright abode 80
 Your selves were present ; where this minstrel-God
 (Well pleas'd to share the feast,) amid the quire
 Stood proud to hymn, and tune his youthful lyre.

Then thus the thund'rer checks th'imperial dame: }
 Let not thy wrath the court of heav'n inflame ; } 85
 Their merits, not their honours, are the same. }
 But mine, and ev'ry God's peculiar grace
 Hector deserves, of all the Trojan race :
 Still on our shrines his grateful off'rings lay,
 (The only honours men to Gods can pay) 90
 Nor ever from our smoking altar cease
 The pure libation, and the holy feast.
 Howe'er by stealth to snatch the corse away,
 We will not : Thetis guards it night and day.

But haste, and summon to our courts above 95
 The azure queen; let her persuasion move
 Her furious son from Priam to receive
 The proffer'd ransom, and the corse to leave.

He added not: and Iris from the skies,
 Swift as a whirlwind on the message flies, 100
 Meteorous the face of Ocean sweeps,
 Refulgent gliding o'er the sable deeps.
 Between where Samos wide his forests spreads,
 And rocky Imbrus lifts its pointed heads,
 Down plung'd the maid; (the parted waves resound) 105
 She plung'd, and instant shot the dark profound.
 As bearing death in the fallacious bait
 From the bent angle sinks the leaden weight;
 So past the Goddess thro' the closing wave,
 Where Thetis sorrow'd in her secret cave: 110
 There plac'd amidst her melancholy train
 (The blue-hair'd sisters of the sacred main)
 Pensive she sate, revolving fates to come,
 And wept her God-like son's approaching doom.

ψ. 114. *And wept her God-like son's approaching doom.*]
 These words are very artfully inserted by the poet.
 The poet could not proceed to the death of Achilles
 without breaking the action; and therefore to satisfy
 the curiosity of the reader concerning the fate of this
 great man, he takes care to inform us that his life draws
 to a period, and as it were celebrates his funeral before
 his death.

Such circumstances as these greatly raise the character
 of Achilles; he is so truly valiant, that though he knows
 he must fall before Troy, yet he does not abstain from

Then thus the Goddess of the painted bow. 115

Arise, O Thetis, from thy seats below,
'Tis Jove that calls. And why (the dame replies)
Calls Jove his Thetis to the hated skies?
Sad object as I am for heav'nly sight!

Ah may my sorrows ever shun the light! 120

Howe'er be heav'n's almighty fire obey'd——

She spake, and veil'd her head in sable shade,
Which, flowing long, her graceful person clad;
And forth she pac'd, majestically sad.

Then thro' the world of waters, they repair 125
(The way fair Iris led) to upper air.

The deeps dividing, o'er the coast they rise,
And touch with momentary flight the skies.
There in the light'nings blaze the fire they found,
And all the Gods in shining synod round. 130

Thetis approach'd with anguish in her face,
(Minerva rising, gave the mourner place)

the war, but couragiously meets his death: and here I think it proper to insert an observation that ought to have been made before, which is, that Achilles did not know that Hector was to fall by his hand; if he had known it, where would have been the mighty courage in engaging him in a single combate, in which he was sure to conquer? The contrary of this is evident from the words of Achilles to Hector just before the combate,

-----Πρὶν γ' ἢ ἕτερόν γε πείσονται
Αἴματός ἄσαι ἄρνα, etc.

I will make no compacts with thee, says Achilles, but one of us shall fall.

Ev'n Juno fought her sorrows to console,
And offer'd from her hand the nectar bowl:

She tasted, and resign'd it: Then began 135
The sacred fire of Gods and mortal man:

Thou com'st, fair Thetis, but with grief o'ercast,
Maternal sorrows long, ah long to last!

Suffice, we know and we partake thy cares:

But yield to fate, and hear what Jove declares. 140

Nine days are past, since all the court above

In Hector's cause have mov'd the ear of Jove;

ψ. 141. *Nine days are past, since all the court above,* etc.] It may be thought that so many interpositions of the gods, such messages from heaven to earth, and down to the seas, are needless machines; and it may be imagined that it is an offence against probability that so many deities should be employed to pacify Achilles: but I am of opinion that the poet conducts this whole affair with admirable judgment. The poem is now almost at the conclusion, and Achilles is to pass from a state of an almost inexorable resentment to a state of perfect tranquillity; such a change could not be brought about by human means; Achilles is too stubborn to obey any thing less than a God: this is evident from his rejecting the persuasion of the whole Grecian army to return to the battel: so that it appears that this machinery was necessary, and consequently a beauty to the poem.

It may be farther added, that these several incidents proceed from Jupiter: it is by his appointment that so many gods are employed to attend Achilles. By these means Jupiter fulfils the promise mentioned in the first book, of honouring the son of Thetis, and Homer excellently sustains his character by representing the inexora-

'Twas voted, Hermes from his god-like foe
By stealth should bear him, but we will'd not so :
We will, thy son himself the corse restore, 145
And to his conquest add this glory more.

Then hye thee to him, and our mandate bear ;
Tell him he tempts the wrath of heav'n too far :
Nor let him more (our anger if he dread)
Vent his mad vengeance on the sacred dead : 150
But yield to ransom and the father's pray'r.

The mournful father Iris shall prepare,
With gifts to sue ; and offer to his hands
Whate'er his honour asks, or heart demands.

His word the silver-footed queen attends, 155
And from Olympus' snowy tops descends.

Arriv'd, she heard the voice of loud lament,
And echoing groans that shook the lofty tent.

His friends prepare the victim, and dispose
Repast unheeded, while he vents his woes. 160

The Goddess seats her by her pensive son,
She prest his hand, and tender thus begun.

ble Achilles as not parting with the body of his mortal
enemy, but by the immediate command of Jupiter.

If the poet had conducted these incidents merely by
human means, or supposed Achilles to restore the body
of Hector entirely out of compassion, the draught had
been unnatural, because unlike Achilles : such a violence
of temper was not to be pacified by ordinary methods.
Besides, he has made use of the properest personages to
carry on the affair ; for who could be supposed to have
so great an influence upon Achilles as his own mother,
who is a goddess ?

How long, unhappy ! shall thy sorrows flow !
 And thy heart waste with life-consuming woe ?
 Mindless of food, or love whose pleasing reign 165
 Soothes weary life, and softens human pain.
 O snatch the moments yet within thy pow'r,
 Nor long to live, indulge the am'rous hour !

ψ. 164. *And thy heart waste with life-consuming woe.*] This expression in the original is very particular. Were it to be translated literally, it must be rendered, how long wilt thou *eat, or prey upon thy own heart* by these sorrows ? And it seems that it was a common way of expressing a deep sorrow ; and Pythagoras uses it in this sense, *μη ἐσθίειν καρδίαν*, that is, grieve not excessively, let not sorrow make too great an impression upon thy heart. Eustathius.

ψ. 168. — *Indulge the am'rous hour !*] The ancients (says Eustathius) rejected these verses because of the indecent idea they convey : the goddess in plain terms advises Achilles to go to bed to his mistress, and tells him a woman will be a comfort. The good bishop is of opinion, that they ought to be rejected, but the reason he gives is as extraordinary as that of Thetis : soldiers, says he, have more occasion for something to strengthen themselves with, than for women : and this is the reason, continues he, why wrestlers are forbid all commerce with that sex during the whole time of their exercise.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus endeavours to justify Homer by observing that this advice of Thetis was not given him to induce him to any wantonness, but was intended to indulge a nobler passion, his desire of glory : she advises him to go to that captive who was restored to him in a public manner to satisfy his honour : to that captive, the detention of whom had been so great a punishment to the whole Grecian army. And therefore Thetis uses

Lo! Jove himself (for Jove's command I bear)

Forbids to tempt the wrath of heav'n too far, 170

uses a very proper motive to comfort her son, by advising him to gratify at once both his love and his glory.

Plutarch has likewise laboured in Homer's justification; he observes that the poet has set the picture of Achilles in this place in a very fair and strong point of light: though Achilles had so lately received his beloved Briseis from the hands of Agamemnon; though he knew that his own life drew to a sudden period; yet the hero prevails over the lover, and he does not haste to indulge his love: he does not lament Patroclus like a common man by neglecting the duties of life, but he abstains from all pleasure by an excess of sorrow, and the love of his mistress is lost in that of his friend.

This observation excellently justifies Achilles, in not indulging himself with the company of his mistress: the hero indeed prevails so much over the lover, that Thetis thinks herself obliged to recall Briseis to his memory. Yet still the indecency remains. All that can be said in favour of Thetis is, that she was mother to Achilles, and consequently might take the greater freedom with her son.

Madam Dacier disapproves of both the former observations: she has recourse to the lawfulness of such a practice between Achilles and Briseis; and because such commerces in those times were reputed honest, therefore she thinks the advice was decent: the married ladies are obliged to her for this observation, and I hope all tender mothers, when their sons are afflicted, will advise them to comfort themselves in this manner.

In short, I am of opinion that this passage outrages decency; and it is a sign of some weakness to have so much occasion of justification. Indeed the whole passage is capable of a serious construction, and of such a sense as a mother might express to a son with decency: and then it will run thus, "Why art thou, my son,

No longer then (his fury if thou dread)
 Detain the relics of great Hector dead;
 Nor vent on senseless earth thy vengeance vain,
 But yield to ransom, and restore the slain.

To whom Achilles: be the ransom giv'n, 175
 And we submit, since such the will of heav'n.

While thus they commun'd, from th' Olympian bow'rs
 Jove orders Iris to the Trojan tow'rs.

Haste, winged Goddess! to the sacred town,
 And urge her monarch to redeem his son; 180

Alone, the Ilian ramparts let him leave,
 And bear what stern Achilles may receive:

Alone, for so we will: no Trojan near;

Except to place the dead with decent care,
 Some aged herald, who with gentle hand, 185

May the slow mules and fun'ral car command.

Nor let him death, nor let him danger dread,

Safe thro' the foe by our protection led:

“ thus afflicted? Why thus resigned to sorrow? Can
 “ neither sleep nor love divert you? Short is thy date
 “ of life, spend it not all in weeping, but allow some
 “ part of it to love and pleasure!” But still the indecency
 lies in the manner of the expression, which must be al-
 lowed to be almost obscene, (for such is the word *μισγερὶς*
misgeri.) All that can be said in defence of it is, that as
 we are not competent judges of what ideas words might
 carry in Homer's time, so we ought not intirely to con-
 demn him, because it is possible the expression might not
 sound so indecently in ancient, as in modern ears.

Him Hermes to Achilles shall convey,
Guard of his life, and partner of his way. 190
Fierce as he is, Achilles' self shall spare
His age, nor touch one venerable hair:

ψ. 189. *Him Hermes to Achilles shall convey.*] The intervention of Mercury was very necessary at this time, and by it the poet not only gives an air of probability to the relation, but also pays a complement to his countrymen the Grecians: they kept so strict a guard that nothing but a God could pass unobserved; this highly recommends their military discipline; and Priam not being able to carry the ransom without a chariot, it would have been an offence against probability to have supposed him able to have passed all the guards of the army in his chariot, without the assistance of some deity: Horace had this passage in his view, ode the 10th of the first book,

Iniqua Trojæ castra fefellit.

ψ. 191. — *Achilles' self shall spare
His age, nor touch one venerable hair, etc.*]

It is observable that every word here is a negative, ἀφρων, ἀσκοπος, ἀλιτήμων; Achilles is still so angry that Jupiter cannot say he is wise, judicious, and merciful; he only commends him negatively, and barely says he is not a madman, nor perversely wicked.

It is the observation of the ancients, says Eustathius, that all the causes of the sins of man are included in those three words: man offends either out of ignorance, and then he is ἀφρων; or through inadvertency, then he is ἀσκοπος; or wilfully and maliciously, and then he is ἀλιτήμων. So that this description agrees very well with the present disposition of Achilles; he is not ἀφρων, because his resentment begins to abate; he is not ἀσκοπος, because his mother has given him instructions; nor

Some thought there must be, in a soul so brave,
Some sense of duty, some desire to save.

Then down her bow the winged Iris drives, 195
And swift at Priam's mournful court arrives:
Where the sad sons beside their father's throne
Sate bath'd in tears, and answer'd groan with groan.
And all amidst them lay the hoary fire,
(Sad scene of woe!) His face his wrapt attire 200

ἀλιτῆρων, because he will not offend against the injunctions of Jupiter.

ψ. 195. *The winged Iris flies, etc.*] Mons. Rapin has been very free upon this passage, where so many machines are made use of, to cause Priam to obtain the body of Hector from Achilles, "This father (says he) " who has so much tenderness for this son, who is so " superstitious in observing the funeral ceremonies, and " saving those precious remains from the dogs and " vultures; ought not he to have thought of doing this " himself, without being thus expressly commanded by " the gods? Was there need of a machine to make " him remember that he was a father?" But this critic intirely forgets what rendered such a conduct of absolute necessity; namely, the extreme danger and (in all probability) imminent ruin both of the king and state, upon Priam's putting himself into the power of his most inveterate enemy. There was no other method of recovering Hector, and of discharging his funeral rites (which were looked upon by the ancients of so high importance) and therefore the message from Jupiter to encourage Priam, with the assistance of Mercury to conduct him, and to prepare Achilles to receive him with favour, was far from impertinent: it was *dignus vindice nodus*, as Horace expresses it.

ψ. 200. *His face his wrapt attire Conceal'd from sight.*] The poet has observed a great decency in this

Conceal'd from sight; with frantic hands he spread
 A show'r of ashes o'er his neck and head.
 From room to room his pensive daughters roam;
 Whose shrieks and clamours fill the vaulted dome;
 Mindful of those, who, late their pride and joy, 205
 Lie pale and breathless round the fields of Troy!
 Before the king Jove's messenger appears,
 And thus in whispers greets his trembling ears.

Fear not, oh father! no ill news I bear;
 From Jove I come, Jove makes thee still his care: 210
 For Hector's sake these walls he bids thee leave,
 And bear what stern Achilles may receive;
 Alone, for so he wills: no Trojan near,
 Except to place the dead with decent care;
 Some aged herald, who with gentle hand, 215
 May the slow mules and fun'ral car command.
 Nor shalt thou death, nor shalt thou danger dread;
 Safe thro' the foe by his protection led;
 Thee Hermes to Pelides shall convey,
 Guard of thy life, and partner of thy way. 220
 Fierce as he is, Achilles' self shall spare
 Thy age, nor touch one venerable hair;

place; he was not able to express the grief of his royal mourner, and so covers what he could not represent. From this passage Semanthes the Sicyonian painter borrowed his design in the sacrifice of Iphigenia, and represents his Agamemnon, as Homer does his Priam: Æschylus has likewise imitated this place, and draws his Niobe exactly after the manner of Homer. Eustathius.

Some thought there must be, in a soul so brave,
Some sense of duty, some desire to save.

She spoke, and vanish'd. Priam bids prepare 225
His gentle mules, and harness to the car;
There, for the gifts, a polish'd casket lay :
His pious sons the king's command obey.
Then past the monarch to his bridal room,
Where cedar-beams the lofty roofs perfume, 230
And where the treasures of his empire lay ;
Then call'd the queen, and thus began to say.

Unhappy consort of a king distressed ;
Partake the troubles of thy husband's breast :
I saw descend the messenger of Jove, 235
Who bids me try Achilles' mind to move ;
For sake these ramparts, and with gifts obtain
The corps of Hector, at yon' navy slain.
Tell me thy thought : my heart impels to go
Thro' hostile camps, and bears me to the foe. 240

The hoary monarch thus. Her piercing cries
Sad Hecuba renews, and then replies.
Ah ! whither wanders thy distemper'd mind ?
And where the prudence now that aw'd mankind ?
Thro' Phrygia once, and foreign regions known, 245
Now all confus'd, distracted, overthrown !
Singly to pass thro' hosts of foes ! to face
(Oh heart of steel !) the murd'rer of thy race !
To view that deathful eye, and wander o'er
Those hands, yet red with Hector's noble gore ! 250

Alas! my lord! he knows not how to spare,
 And what his mercy, thy slain sons declare;
 So brave! so many fall'n! to calm his rage
 Vain were thy dignity, and vain thy age.
 No——pent in this sad palace, let us give 255
 To grief, the wretched days we have to live.
 Still, still for Hector let our sorrows flow,
 Born to his own, and to his parents woe!
 Doom'd from the hour his luckless life begun,
 To dogs, to vultures, and to Peleus' son! 260
 Oh! in his dearest blood might I allay
 My rage, and these barbarities repay!
 For ah! could Hector merit thus? whose breath
 Expir'd not meanly, in unactive death:
 He pour'd his latest blood in manly fight, 265
 And fell a hero in his country's right.

Seek not to stay me, nor my soul affright
 With words of omen, like a bird of night;
 (Reply'd unmov'd the venerable man)
 'Tis heav'n commands me, and you urge in vain. 270

ψ. 265. *He pour'd his latest blood in manly fight,
 And fell a hero———*] This whole dis-
 course of Hecuba is exceedingly natural, she aggravates
 the features of Achilles, and softens those of Hector: her
 anger blinds her so much, that she can see nothing great
 in Achilles, and her fondness so much, that she can dis-
 cern no defects in Hector. Thus she draws Achilles in
 the fiercest colours, like a Barbarian, and calls him *αμνηστος*:
 but at the same time forgets that Hector ever fled from
 Achilles, and in the original directly tells us that *he knew*
not how to fear, or how to fly. Eustathius.

Had any mortal voice th' injunction laid,

Nor augur, priest, or seer had been obey'd.

A present Goddess brought the high command,

I saw, I heard her, and the word shall stand.

I go, ye Gods! obedient to your call:

275

If in yon' camp your pow'rs have doom'd my fall,

Content——By the same hand let me expire!

Add to the slaughter'd son the wretched fire!

One cold embrace at least may be allow'd,

And my last tears flow mingled with his blood! 280

From forth his open'd stores, this said, he drew
Twelve costly carpets of refulgent hue,

As many vests, as many mantles told,

And twelve fair veils and garments stiff with gold.

Two tripods next, and twice two chargers shine, 285

With ten pure talents from the richest mine;

And last a large well labour'd bowl had place,

(The pledge of treaties once with friendly Thrace)

Seem'd all too mean the stores he could employ,

For one last look to buy him back to Troy!

290

Lo! the sad father, frantic with his pain,

Around him furious drives his menial train:

ψ. 291. *Lo! the sad father, etc.*] This behaviour of Priam is very natural to a person in his circumstances: the loss of his favourite son makes so deep an impression upon his spirits, that he is incapable of consolation; he is displeased with every body; he is angry he knows not why; the disorder and hurry of his spirits make him break out into passionate expressions, and those expressions are contained in short periods, very natural to

In vain each slave with duteous care attends,
Each office hurts him, and each face offends.

What make ye here? officious crouds! (he cries) 295

Hence! nor obtrude your anguish on my eyes.

Have ye no griefs at home, to fix ye there;

Am I the only object of despair?

men in anger, who give not themselves leisure to express their sentiments at full length: it is from the same passion that Priam, in the second speech, treats all his sons with the utmost indignity, calls them gluttons, dancers, and flatterers. Eustathius very justly remarks, that he had Paris particularly in his eye; but his anger makes him transfer that character to the rest of his children, not being calm enough to make a distinction between the innocent and guilty.

That passage where he runs into the praises of Hector, is particularly natural: his concern and fondness make him as extravagant in the commendation of him, as in the disparagement of his other sons: they are less than mortals, he more than man. Rapin has censured this anger of Priam as a breach of the *manners*, and says he might have shewn himself a father, otherwise than by this usage of his children. But whoever considers his circumstances, will judge after another manner. Priam, after having been the most wealthy, most powerful and formidable monarch of Asia, becomes all at once the most miserable of men; he loses in less than eight days the best of his army, and a great number of virtuous sons; he loses the bravest of them all, his glory and his defence, the gallant Hector. This last blow sinks him quite, and changes him so much, that he is no longer the same: he becomes impatient, frantic, unreasonable! the terrible effect of ill fortune! whoever has the least insight into nature, must admire so fine a picture of the force of adversity on an unhappy old man.

Am I become my people's common show,
 Set up by Jove your spectacle of woe? 300
 No, you must feel him too; yourselves must fall;
 The same stern God to ruin gives you all:
 Nor is great Hector lost by me alone;
 Your sole defence, your guardian pow'r is gone!
 I see your blood the fields of Phrygia drown, 305
 I see the ruins of your smoking town!
 Oh send me, Gods! ere that sad day shall come,
 A willing ghost to Pluto's dreary dome!

He said, and feebly drives his friends away:
 The sorrowing friends his frantic rage obey. 310
 Next on his sons his erring fury falls,
 Polites, Paris, Agathon, he calls,
 His threats Deiphobus and Dius hear,
 Hippothous, Pammon, Helenus the seer,
 And gen'rous Antiphon: for yet these nine 315
 Surviv'd, sad relics of his num'rous line.

Inglorious sons of an unhappy sire!
 Why did not all in Hector's cause expire?
 Wretch that I am! my bravest offspring slain,
 You, the disgrace of Priam's house, remain! 320
 Mestor the brave, renown'd in ranks of war,
 With Troilus, dreadful on his rushing car,

ψ. 313. *Deiphobus and Dius.*] It has been a dispute whether Δῖος or Ἀγανός, in ψ. 251. was a proper name; but Pherecydes (says Eustathius) determines it, and assures us that Dios was a spurious son of Priam.

And last great Hector, more than man divine,
 For sure he seem'd not of terrestrial line !
 All those relentless Mars untimely slew, 325
 And left me these, a soft and servile crew,
 Whose days the feast and wanton dance employ,
 Gluttons and flatterers, the contempt of Troy !
 Why teach ye not my rapid wheels to run,
 And speed my journey to redeem my son ? 330

The sons their father's wretched age revere,
 Forgive his anger, and produce the car.
 High on the seat the cabinet they bind :
 The new-made car with solid beauty shin'd ;
 Box was the yoke, embost with costly pains, 335
 And hung with ringlets to receive the reins ;
 Nine cubits long the traces swept the ground ;
 These to the chariot's polish'd pole they bound,
 Then fix'd a ring the running reins to guide,
 And close beneath the gather'd ends were ty'd. 340
 Next with the gifts (the price of Hector slain)
 The sad attendants load the groaning wain :
 Last to the yoke the well-match'd mules they bring,
 (The gift of Mysia to the Trojan king.)
 But the fair horses, long his darling care, 345
 Himself receiv'd, and harness'd to his car :

ψ. 342. *The sad attendants load the groaning wain.*]
 It is necessary to observe to the reader, to avoid confusion, that two cars are here prepared ; the one drawn by mules, to carry the presents, and to bring back the body of Hector ; the other drawn by horses, in which the herald and Priam rode. Eustathius.

Griev'd as he was, he not this task deny'd;
 The hoary herald help'd him at his side.
 While careful these the gentle coursers join'd,
 Sad Hecuba approach'd with anxious mind; 350
 A golden bowl that foam'd with fragrant wine,
 (Libation destin'd to the pow'r divine)
 Held in her right, before the steeds she stands,
 And thus consigns it to the monarch's hands.

Take this, and pour to Jove; that safe from harms, 355
 His grace restore thee to our roof, and arms.
 Since victor of thy fears, and flighting mine,
 Heav'n, or thy soul, inspire this bold design:
 Pray to that God, who high on Ida's brow
 Surveys thy desolated realms below, 360
 His winged messenger to send from high,
 And lead thy way with heav'nly augury:
 Let the strong sov'reign of the plummy race
 Tow'r on the right of yon' æthereal space.
 That sign beheld, and strengthen'd from above, 365
 Boldly pursue the journey mark'd by Jove;
 But if the God his augury denies,
 Suppress thy impulse, nor reject advice.

'Tis just (said Priam) to the fire above
 To raise our hands, for who so good as Jove? 370
 He spoke, and bad th' attendant handmaid bring
 The purest water of the living spring:
 (Her ready hands the ewer and bason held)
 Then took the golden cup his queen had fill'd;

On the mid pavement pours the rosy wine, 375

Uplifts his eyes, and calls the pow'r divine.

Oh first, and greatest! heav'n's imperial lord!

On lofty Ida's holy hill ador'd!

To stern Achilles now direct my ways,

And teach him mercy when a father prays. 380

If such thy will, dispatch from yonder sky

Thy sacred bird, celestial augury!

Let the strong sov'reign of the plummy race

Tow'r on the right of yon' æthereal space:

So shall thy suppliant, strengthen'd from above, 385

Fearless pursue the journey mark'd by Jove.

Jove heard his pray'r, and from the throne on high

Dispatch'd his bird, celestial augury!

The swift-wing'd chaser of the feather'd game,

And known to Gods by Perenos' lofty name. 390

Wide, as appears some palace-gate display'd,

So broad, his pinions stretch'd their ample shade,

As stooping dexter with resounding wings

Th' imperial bird descends in airy rings.

ψ. 377. *Oh first; and greatest! etc.*] Eustathius observes, that there is not one instance in the whole Ilias of any prayer that was justly preferred, that failed of success. This proceeding of Homer's is very judicious, and answers exactly to the true end of poetry, which is to please and instruct. Thus Priam prays that Achilles may cease his wrath, and compassionate his miseries; and Jupiter grants his request: the unfortunate king obtains compassion, and in his most inveterate enemy finds a friend.

A dawn of joy in ev'ry face appears: 395
 The mourning matron dries her tim'rous tears.
 Swift on the car th' impatient monarch sprung;
 The brazen portal in his passage rung.
 The mules preceding draw the loaded wain,
 Charg'd with the gifts: Idæus holds the rein: 400
 The king himself his gentle steeds controuls,
 And thro' surrounding friends the chariot rolls.
 On his slow wheels the following people wait,
 Mourn at each step, and give him up to fate;
 With hands uplifted, eye him as he past, 405
 And gaze upon him as they gaz'd their last.
 Now forward fares the father on his way,
 Thro' the lone fields, and back to Ilion they.
 Great Jove beheld him as he crost the plain,
 And felt the woes of miserable man, 410
 Then thus to Hermes. Thou whose constant cares
 Still succour mortals, and attend their pray'rs;
 Behold an object to thy charge consign'd,
 If ever pity touch'd thee for mankind.
 Go, guard the fire; th' observing foe prevent, 415
 And safe conduct him to Achilles' tent.

The God obeys, his golden pinions binds,
 And mounts incumbent on the wings of winds,

ψ. 417. *The description of Mercury.*] A man must have no taste for poetry that does not admire this sublime description: Virgil has translated it almost *verbatim* in the 4th book of the *Æneis*, ψ. 240.

— Ille patris magni parere parabat
 Imperio, et primam pedibus talaria nectit

That high thro' fields of air his flight sustain,
 O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless main: 420
 Then grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly,
 Or in soft slumbers seals the wakeful eye;
 Thus arm'd, swift Hermes steers his airy way,
 And stoops on Hellespont's resounding sea.
 A beauteous youth, majestic and divine, 425
 He seem'd; fair offspring of some princely line!

*Aurea, quæ sublimem alis, sive æquora supra,
 Seu terram rapido pariter cum flamine portant.
 Tum virgam capit, hac animas ille evocat orco
 Pallentes, alias sub tristia tartara mittit;
 Dat somnos, adimitque, et lumina morte resignat.*

It is hard to determine which is more excellent, the copy, or the original: Mercury appears in both pictures with equal majesty; and the Roman dress becomes him as well as the Grecian. Virgil has added the latter part of the fifth, and the whole sixth line, to Homer, which makes it still more full and majestic.

Give me leave to produce a passage out of Milton of near affinity with the lines above, which is not inferior to Homer or Virgil: it is the description of the descent of an angel.

——Down thither, prone in flight
 He speeds, and thro' the vast æthereal sky
 Sails between worlds and worlds; with steady wing:
 Now on the polar winds: then with quick force
 Winnows the buxom air——
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
 Circled his head; nor less his locks behind
 Illustrious, on his shoulders fledg'd with wings,
 Lay waving round,——etc.

Now twilight veil'd the glaring face of day,
 And clad the dusky fields in sober gray;
 What time the herald and the hoary king
 Their chariots stopping, at the silver spring 439
 That circling Ilus' ancient marble flows,
 Allow'd their mules and steeds a short repose.
 Thro' the dim shade the herald first espies
 A man's approach, and thus to Priam cries.
 I mark some foe's advance: O king! beware; 435
 This hard adventure claims thy utmost care:
 For much I fear, destruction hovers nigh:
 Our state asks counsel; is it best to fly?
 Or, old and helpless, at his feet to fall,
 (Two wretched suppliants) and for mercy call? 440

ψ. 427. Now twilight veil'd the glaring face of day.
 The poet by such intimations as these recalls to our minds the exact time which Priam takes up in his journey to Achilles: he set out in the evening; and by the time that he had reached the tomb of Ilus, it was grown somewhat dark, which shews that this tomb stood at some distance from the city: here Mercury meets him, and when it was quite dark, guides him into the presence of Achilles. By these methods we may discover how exactly the poet preserves the unities of time and place, and he allots space sufficient for the actions which he describes, and yet does not crowd more incidents into any interval of time than may be executed in as much as he allows: thus it being improbable that so stubborn a man as Achilles should relent in a few moments, the poet allows a whole night for this affair, so that Priam has leisure enough to go and return, and time enough remaining to persuade Achilles.

Th' afflicted monarch shiver'd with despair;
 Pale grew his face, and upright stood his hair;
 Sunk was his heart; his colour went and came;
 A sudden trembling shook his aged frame:
 When Hermes greeting, touch'd his royal hand, 445
 And gentle, thus accosts with kind demand.

Say whither, father! when each mortal fight
 Is seal'd in sleep, thou wander'st thro' the night?

ψ. 447. *etc. The speech of Mercury to Priam.*] I shall not trouble the reader with the dreams of Eustathius, who tells us that this fiction of Mercury, is partly true and partly false: It is true that his father is old; for Jupiter is king of the whole universe, was from eternity, and created both men and gods: in like manner, when Mercury says he is the seventh child of his father, Eustathius affirms that he meant that there were six planets besides Mercury. Sure it requires great pains and thought to be so learnedly absurd: the supposition which he makes afterwards is far more natural. Priam, says he, might by chance meet with one of the Myrmidons, who might conduct him unobserved through the camp into the presence of Achilles: and as the execution of any wise design is ascribed to Pallas, so may this clandestine enterprize be said to be managed by the guidance of Mercury.

But perhaps this whole passage may be better explained by having recourse to the Pagan theology: it was an opinion that obtained in those early days, that Jupiter frequently sent some friendly messengers to protect the innocent, so that Homer might intend to give his readers a lecture of morality, by telling us that this unhappy king was under the protection of the gods.

Madam Dacier carries it farther. Homer (say she) instructed by tradition, knew that God sends his angels to the succour of the afflicted. The scripture is full of

Why roam thy mules and steeds the plains along,
 Thro' Grecian foes, so num'rous and so strong! 450
 What could'st thou hope, should these thy treasures view,
 These, who with endless hate thy race pursue?
 For what defence, alas! could'st thou provide?
 Thy self not young, a weak old man thy guide.
 Yet suffer not thy soul to sink with dread; 455
 From me no harm shall touch thy rev'rend head;
 From Greece I'll guard thee too; for in those lines
 The living image of my father shines.

Thy words, that speak benevolence of mind
 Are true, my son! (the god-like sire rejoin'd) 460
 Great are my hazards; but the Gods survey
 My steps, and send thee, guardian of my way.

examples of this truth. The story of Tobit has a wonderful relation with this of Homer: Tobit sent his son to Rages, a city of Media, to receive a considerable sum; Tobias did not know the way; he found at his door a young man clothed with a majestic glory, which attracted admiration; it was an angel under the form of a man. This angel being asked who he was, answered (as Mercury does here) by a fiction; he said that he was of the children of Israel, that his name was Azarias, and that he was son of Ananias. This angel conducted Tobias in safety; he gave him instructions; and when he was to receive the recompence which the father and son offered him, he declared that he was the angel of the Lord, took his flight towards heaven, and disappeared. Here is a great conformity in the ideas and in the style; and the example of our author so long before Tobit, proves, that this opinion of God's sending his angels to the aid of man was very common, and much spread amongst the Pagans in those former times. Dacier.

Hail, and be blest ! for scarce of mortal kind
Appear thy form, thy feature, and thy mind.

Nor true are all thy words, nor erring wide ; 465
(The sacred messenger of heav'n reply'd)

But say, convey'st thou thro' the lonely plains
What yet most precious of thy store remains,
To lodge in safety with some friendly hand?

Prepar'd perchance to leave thy native land. 470

Or fly'st thou now ? what hopes can Troy retain ?

Thy matchless son, her guard and glory, slain !

The king alarm'd. Say what, and whence thou art,
Who search the sorrows of a parent's heart,

And know so well how god-like Hector dy'd ? 475

Thus Priam spoke, and Hermes thus reply'd.

You tempt me, father, and with pity touch :

On this sad subject you enquire too much.

Oft' have these eyes that god-like Hector view'd

In glorious fight with Grecian blood embu'd : 480

I saw him, when like Jove his flames he tost

On thousand ships, and wither'd half a host :

I saw, but help'd not : stern Achilles' ire

Forbad assistance, and enjoy'd the fire.

For him I serve, of Myrmidonian race ; 485

One ship convey'd us from our native place ;

Polyctor is my sire, an honour'd name,

Old like thyself, and not unknown to fame ;

Of sev'n his sons by whom the lost was cast

To serve our prince, it fell on me, the last. 490

To watch this quarter my adventure falls,
 For with the morn the Greeks attack your walls ;
 Sleepless they sit, impatient to engage,
 And scarce their rulers check their martial rage.

If then thou art of stern Pelides' train, 495
 (The mournful monarch thus rejoin'd again)
 Ah tell me truly, where, oh ! where are laid
 My son's dear relics ? what befalls him dead ?
 Have dogs dismember'd on the naked plains,
 Or yet unmangled rest his cold remains ? 500

O favour'd of the skies ! (thus answer'd then
 The pow'r that mediates between Gods and men)
 Nor dogs nor vultures have thy Hector rent,
 But whole he lies, neglected in the tent :
 This the twelfth ev'ning since he rested there, 505
 Untouch'd by worms, untainted by the air.
 Still as Aurora's ruddy beam is spread,
 Round his friend's tomb Achilles drags the dead :
 Yet undisfigur'd, or in limb or face,
 All fresh he lies, with ev'ry living grace, 510
 Majestical in death ! no stains are found
 O'er all the corse, and clos'd is ev'ry wound ;
 (Tho' many a wound they gave) some heav'nly care,
 Some hand divine, preserves him ever fair :
 Or all the host of heav'n, to whom he led 515
 A life so grateful, still regard him dead.

Thus spoke to Priam the celestial guide,
 And joyful thus the royal sire reply'd.

Blest is the man who pays the Gods above
The constant tribute of respect and love! 520

Those who inhabit the Olympian bow'r
My son forgot not, in exalted pow'r;
And heav'n, that ev'ry virtue bears in mind,
Ev'n to the ashes of the just, is kind.

But thou, oh gen'rous youth! this goblet take, 525
A pledge of gratitude for Hector's sake;
And while the fav'ring Gods our steps survey,
Safe to Pelides' tent conduct my way.

To whom the latent God. O king forbear
To tempt my youth, for apt is youth to err: 530
But can I, absent from my prince's sight,
Take gifts in secret, that must shun the light?

ψ. 519. *Blest is the man, etc.*] Homer now begins, after a beautiful and long fable, to give the moral of it, and display his poetical justice in rewards and punishments: thus Hector fought in a bad cause, and therefore suffers in the defence of it; but because he was a good man, and obedient to the gods in other respects, his very remains become the care of heaven.

I think it necessary to take notice to the reader, that nothing is more admirable than the conduct of Homer throughout his whole poem, in respect to morality. He justifies the character of Horace,

—*Quid pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius et melius Chrysis et Crantor dicit.*

If the reader does not observe the morality of the Ilias, he loses half, and the nobler part of its beauty: he reads it as a common romance, and mistakes the chief aim of it, which is to instruct.

ψ. 531. *But can I, absent, etc.*] In the original of

What from our master's int'rest thus we draw,
 Is but a licens'd theft that 'scapes the law.
 Respecting him, my soul abjures th' offence; 535
 And as the crime, I dread the consequence.
 Thee, far as Argos, pleas'd I could convey :
 Guard of thy life, and partner of thy way.
 On thee attend, thy safety to maintain,
 O'er pathless forests, or the roling main. 540

He said, then took the chariot at a bound,
 And snatch'd the reins, and whirl'd the lash around :
 Before th' inspiring God that urg'd them on,
 The coursers fly, with spirit not their own.
 And now they reach'd the naval walls, and found 545
 The guards repasting, while the bowls go round ;
 On these the virtue of his wand he tries,
 And pours deep slumber on their watchful eyes :
 Then heav'd the massy gates, remov'd the bars,
 And o'er the trenches led the rolling cars, 550
 Unseen, thro' all the hostile camp they went,
 And now approach'd Pelides' lofty tent.

this place (which I have paraphrased a little) the word *Συλῆσις* is remarkable. Priam offers Mercury (whom he looks upon as a soldier of Achilles) a present, which he refuses because his prince is ignorant of it: this present he calls a direct *theft* or *robbery*; which may shew us how strict the notions of justice were in the days of Homer, when if a prince's servant received any present without the knowlege of his master, he was esteemed a thief and a robber. Eustathius.

Of fir the roof was rais'd, and cover'd o'er
 With reeds collected from the marshy shore;
 And, fenc'd with palisades, a hall of state, 555
 (The work of soldiers) where the hero sat.

ψ. 553. *Of fir the roof was rais'd.*] I have in the course of these observations described the method of encamping used by the Grecians: the reader has here a full and exact description of the tent of Achilles: this royal pavilion was built with long palisadoes made of fir: the top of it covered with reeds, and the inside was divided into several apartments: thus Achilles had his αὐλή μεγάλη, or large hall, and behind it were lodging rooms. So in the ninth book Phœnix has a bed prepared for him in one apartment, Patroclus has another for himself and his captive Iphis, and Achilles has a third for himself and his mistress Diomeda.

But we must not imagine that the other Myrmidons had tents of the like dimensions: they were, as Eustathius observes, inferior to this royal one of Achilles: which indeed is no better than an hovel, yet agrees very well with the duties of a soldier, and the simplicity of those early times.

I am of opinion that such fixed tents were not used by the Grecians in their common marches, but only during the time of sieges, when their long stay in one place made it necessary to build such tents as are here described; at other times they lay like Diomed in the tenth book, in the open air, their spears standing upright, to be ready upon any alarm; and with the hides of beasts spread on the ground, instead of a bed.

It is worthy observation, that Homer even upon so trivial an occasion as the describing the tent of Achilles, takes an opportunity to shew the superior strength of his hero; and tells us that three men could scarce open the door of his pavilion, but Achilles could open it alone.

Large was the door, whose well-compacted strength
 A solid pine-tree barr'd, of wond'rous length;
 Scarce three strong Greeks could lift its mighty weight,
 But great Achilles singly clos'd the gate; 560
 This Hermes (such the pow'r of Gods) set wide;
 Then swift alighted the celestial guide,
 And thus, reveal'd—Hear, prince! and understand
 Thou ow'st thy guidance to no mortal hand:
 Hermes I am, descended from above, 565
 The king of arts, the messenger of Jove.
 Farewell: to shun Achilles' fight I fly;
 Uncommon are such favours of the sky,
 Nor stand confest to frail mortality. }
 Now fearless enter, and prefer thy pray'rs; 570
 Adjure him by his father's silver hairs,

ψ. 569. *Nor stand confest to frail mortality.*] Eustathius thinks it was from this maxim, that the princes of the east assumed that air of majesty which separates them from the sight of their subjects; but I should rather believe that Homer copied this after the originals, from some kings of his time: it not being unlikely that this policy is very ancient. Dacier.

ψ. 571. *Adjure him by his father, etc.*] Eustathius observes that Priam does not intirely follow the instructions of Mercury, but only calls to his remembrance his aged father Peleus: and this was judiciously done by Priam: for what motive to compassion could arise from the mention of Thetis, who was a goddess, and incapable of misfortune? Or how could Neoptolemus be any inducement to make Achilles pity Priam, when at the same time he flourished in the greatest prosperity? therefore Priam only mentions his father Peleus, who, like him, stood upon the very brink of the grave, and was

His son, his mother! urge him to bestow
Whatever pity that stern heart can know.

Thus having said, he vanish'd from his eyes,
And in a moment shot into the skies: 575

The king, confirm'd from heav'n, alighted there,
And left his aged herald on the car.

With solemn pace thro' various rooms he went,
And found Achilles in his inner tent:

There sate the hero; Alcimus the brave, 580

And great Automedon, attendance gave:

These serv'd his person at the royal feast,

Around, at awful distance, stood the rest.

Unseen by these, the king his entry made;

And prostrate now before Achilles laid, 585

Sudden, (a venerable sight!) appears;

Embrac'd his knees, and bath'd his hands in tears;

liable to the same misfortunes he suffered. These are the remarks of Eustathius; but how then shall we justify Mercury, who gave him such improper instructions with relation to Thetis? All that can be said in defence of the poet is, that Thetis, though a goddess, has through the whole course of the Ilias been described as a partner in all the afflictions of Achilles, and consequently might be made use of as an inducement to raise the compassion of Achilles. Priam might have said, I conjure thee by the love thou bearest to thy mother, take pity on me! for if she who is a goddess would grieve for the loss of her beloved son, how greatly must the loss of Hector afflict the unfortunate Hecuba and Priam?

ψ. 586. *Sudden, (a venerable sight!) appears.*] I fancy this interview between Priam and Achilles would furnish an admirable subject for a painter, in the surprize

Those direful hands his kisses press'd, embru'd
 Ev'n with the best, the dearest of his blood!

As when a wretch, (who conscious of his crime, 590
 Pursu'd for murder, flies his native clime)
 Just gains some frontier, breathless, pale! amaz'd!
 All gaze, all wonder: thus Achilles gaz'd:
 Thus stood th' attendants stupid with surprize;
 All mute, yet seem'd to question with their eyes: 595
 Each look'd on other, none the silence broke,
 'Till thus at last the kingly suppliant spoke.

Ah think, thou favour'd of the pow'rs divine!
 Think of thy father's age, and pity mine!

of Achilles, and the other spectators, the attitude of Priam, and the sorrows in the countenance of this unfortunate king.

That circumstance of Priam's kissing the hands of Achilles is inimitably fine; he kissed, says Homer, the hands of Achilles; those terrible, murderous hands that had robbed him of so many sons: by these two words the poet recalls to our mind all the noble actions performed by Achilles in the whole Ilias; and at the same time strikes us with the utmost compassion for this unhappy king, who is reduced so low, as to be obliged to kiss those hands that had slain his subjects, and ruined his kingdom and family:

ψ. 598. *The speech of Priam to Achilles.*] The curiosity of the reader must needs be awakened to know how Achilles would behave to this unfortunate king; it requires all the art of the poet to sustain the violent character of Achilles, and yet at the same time to soften him into compassion. To this end the poet uses no preamble, but breaks directly into that circumstance which is most likely to mollify him, and the two first words he utters are, *μνήσαι Πατρός, see thy father, O A-*

In me, that father's rev'rend image trace, 600

Those silver hairs, that venerable face :

His trembling limbs, his helpless person, see !

In all my equal, but in misery !

Yet now, perhaps, some turn of human fate

Expels him helpless from his peaceful state ; 605

Think, from some pow'rful foe thou see'st him fly,

And beg protection with a feeble cry.

Yet still one comfort in his soul may rise ;

He hears his son still lives to glad his eyes ;

chilles, in me! Nothing could be more happily imagined than this entrance into his speech ; Achilles has every where been described as bearing a great affection to his father, and by two words the poet recalls all the tenderness that love and duty can suggest to an affectionate son.

Priam tells Achilles, that Hector fell in the defence of his country : I am far from thinking that this was inserted accidentally : it could not fail of having a very good effect upon Achilles, not only as one brave man naturally loves another, but as it implies that Hector had no particular enmity against Achilles, but that though he fought against him, it was in defence of his country.

The reader will observe that Priam repeats the beginning of his speech, and recalls his father to his memory in the conclusion of it. This is done with great judgment ; the poet takes care to enforce his petition with the strongest motive, and leaves it fresh upon his memory ; and possibly Priam might perceive that the mention of his father had made a deeper impression upon Achilles than any other part of his petition, therefore while the mind of Achilles dwells upon it, he again sets him before his imagination by this repetition, and softens him into compassion.

And hearing still may hope, a better day 610
 May send him thee, to chase that foe away.
 No comfort to my griefs, no hopes remain,
 'The best, the bravest of my sons are slain!
 Yet what a race; ere Greece to Ilion came,
 The pledge of many a lov'd, and loving dame: 615
 Nineteen one mother bore—Dead, all are dead!
 How oft', alas! has wretched Priam bled?
 Still one was left, their loss to recompense;
 His father's hope, his country's last defence.
 Him too thy rage has slain! beneath thy steel 620
 Unhappy in his country's cause he fell!

For him, thro' hostile camps I bent my way,
 For him thus prostrate at thy feet I lay;
 Large gifts proportion'd to thy wrath I bear;
 Oh hear the wretched, and the Gods revere! 625

'Think of thy father, and this face behold!
 See him in me, as helpless and as old!
 Tho' not so wretched: there he yields to me,
 'The first of men in sov'reign misery.
 Thus forc'd to kneel, thus grov'ling to embrace 630
 The scourge and ruin of my realm and race:
 Suppliant my children's murd'rer to implore,
 And kiss those hands yet reeking with their gore!

These words soft pity in the chief inspire,
 Touch'd with the dear remembrance of his fire. 635

ψ. 634. *These words soft pity, etc.*] We are now
 come almost to the end of the poem, and consequently
 to the end of the anger of Achilles: and Homer has de-

Then with his hand (as prostrate still he lay)
 The old man's cheek he gently turn'd away.
 Now each by turns indulg'd the gush of woe;
 And now the mingled tides together flow:
 This low on earth, that gently bending o'er, 640
 A father one, and one a son deplore:
 But great Achilles diff'rent passions rend,
 And now his fire he mourns, and now his friend.
 Th' infectious softness thro' the heroes ran;
 One universal solemn show'r began; } 645
 They bore as heroes, but they felt as man.

Satiate at length with unavailing woes,
 From the high throne divine Achilles rose;
 The rev'rend monarch by the hand he rais'd;
 On his white beard and form majestic gaz'd, 650
 Not unrelenting: then serene began
 With words to soothe the miserable man.

Alas! what weight of anguish hast thou known?
 Unhappy prince! thus guardless and alone

scribed the abatement of it with excellent judgment. We may here observe how necessary the conduct of Homer was, in sending Thetis to prepare her son to use Priam with civility: it would have been ill suited with the violent temper of Achilles to have used Priam with tenderness without such pre-admonition; nay, the unexpected sight of his enemy might probably have carried him into violence and rage: but Homer has avoided these absurdities; for Achilles being already prepared for a reconciliation, the misery of this venerable prince naturally melts him into compassion.

ψ. 653. *Achilles's speech to Priam.*] There is not a

To pass thro' foes, and thus undaunted face 655
 The man whose fury has destroy'd thy race?
 Heav'n sure has arm'd thee with a heart of steel,
 A strength proportion'd to the woes you feel.
 Rise then: let reason mitigate our care:
 To mourn, avails not: man is born to bear. 660
 Such is, alas! the Gods severe decree:
 They, only they are blest, and only free.
 Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
 The source of evil one, and one of good;

more beautiful passage in the whole *Ilias* than this before us: Homer to shew that Achilles was not a mere soldier, here draws him as a person of excellent sense and sound reason: Plato himself (who condemns this passage) could not speak more like a true philosopher: and it was a piece of great judgment thus to describe him; for the reader would have retained but a very indifferent opinion of the hero of a poem, that had no qualification but mere strength: it also shews the art of the poet thus to defer this part of his character to the very conclusion of the poem: by these means he fixes an idea of his greatness upon our minds, and makes his hero go off the stage with applause.

Neither does he here ascribe more wisdom to Achilles than he might really be master of; for as Eustathius observes, he had Chiron and Phœnix for his tutors, and a goddess for his mother.

ψ. 663. *Two urns by Jove's high throne, etc.*] This is an admirable allegory, and very beautifully imagined by the poet. Pl. *æ* has accused it as an impiety to say that God gives evil: but it seems borrowed from the eastern way of speaking, and bears a great resemblance to several expressions in scripture: thus in the Psalms, *In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and he poureth out*

From thence the cup of mortal man he fills, 665

Blessings to these, to those distributes ill;

To most, he mingles both: the wretch decreed

To taste the bad, unmix'd, is curst indeed;

Pursu'd by wrongs, by meagre famine driv'n,

He wanders, outcast both of earth and heav'n. 670

The happiest taste not happiness sincere,

But find the cordial draught is dash'd with care.

Who more than Peleus shone in wealth and pow'r?

What stars concurring blest his natal hour?

A realm, a Goddess, to his wishes giv'n, 675

Grac'd by the Gods with all the gifts of heav'n!

One evil yet o'ertakes his latest day,

No race succeeding to imperial sway:

of the same; as for the dregs thereof, all the ungodly of the earth shall drink them.

It was the custom of the Jews to give condemned persons just before execution, *οινον ἐσμυρνισμένον*, wine mixed with myrrh, to make them less sensible of pain: thus Prov. xxxi. 6. *Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish.* This custom was so frequent among the Jews, that the cup which was given him before execution, came to denote death itself, as in that passage, *Father, let this cup pass from me.*

Some have supposed that there were three urns, one of good, and two of evil; thus Pindar,

Ἐν γὰρ ἱσθλὸν, πῆματα σύνδυσ
Δαίονται βροτοῖς ἀθάνατοι.

But, as Eustathius observes, the word *ἕτερος* shews that there were but two, for that word is never used when more than two are intended.

An only son ! and he (alas !) ordain'd
To fall untimely in a foreign land ! 680

See him, in Troy, the pious care decline
Of his weak age, to live the curse of thine !
Thou too, old man, hast happier days beheld ;
In riches once, in children once excell'd ;
Extended Phrygia own'd thy ample reign, } 685
And all fair Lesbos' blissful seats contain,
And all wide Hellespont's unmeasur'd main.

But since the God his hand has pleas'd to turn,
And fill thy measure from his bitter urn,
What sees the sun, but hapless heroes falls ? 690

War, and the blood of man, surround thy walls !
What must be, must be. Bear thy lot, nor shed
These unavailing sorrows o'er the dead ;
Thou canst not call him from the Stygian shore,
But thou, alas ! may'st live to suffer more ! 695

To whom the king. O favour'd of the skies ! }
Here let me grow to earth ! since Hector lies }
On the bare beech, depriv'd of obsequies. }

ψ. 685. *Extended Phrygia, etc.*] Homer here gives us a piece of geography, and shews the full extent of Priam's kingdom. Lesbos bounded it on the south, Phrygia on the east, and the Hellespont on the north. This kingdom, according to Strabo in the 13th book, was divided into nine dynasties, who all depended upon Priam as their king : so that what Homer here relates of Priam's power is literally true, and confirmed by history. Eustathius.

O give me Hector ! to my eyes restore

His corse, and take the gifts : I ask no more. 700

Thou, as thou may'st, these boundless stores enjoy ;

Safe may'st thou sail, and turn thy wrath from Troy ;

So shall thy pity and forbearance give

A weak old man to see the light and live !

Move me no more (Achilles thus replies, 705

While kindling anger sparkled in his eyes)

ψ. 706. *While kindling anger sparkled in his eyes.*] I believe every reader must be surprized, as I confess I was, to see Achilles fly out into so sudden a passion, without any apparent reason for it. It can scarce be imagined that the name of Hector (as Eustathius thinks) could throw him into so much violence, when he had heard it mentioned with patience and calmness by Priam in this very conference : especially if we remember that Achilles had actually determined to restore the body of Hector to Priam. I was therefore very well pleased to find that the words in the original would bear another interpretation, and such a one as naturally solves the difficulty. The meaning of the passage I fancy may be this : Priam preceiving that his address had mollified the heart of Achilles, takes this opportunity to persuade him to give over the war, and return home ; especially since his anger was sufficiently satisfied by the fall of Hector. Immediately Achilles takes fire at this proposal, and answers. “ Is it not enough that I have determined “ to restore thy son ? ask no more, lest I retract that “ resolution.” In this view we see a natural reason for the sudden passion of Achilles.

What may perhaps strengthen this conjecture is the word *πρῶτον* ; and then the sense will run thus ; since I have found so much favour in thy sight, as first to permit me to live, O wouldst thou still enlarge my happiness, and return home to thy own country ! *etc.*

Nor seek by tears my steady soul to bend ;

To yield thy Hector I myself intend :

For know, from Jove my Goddess-mother came,

(Old Ocean's daughter, silver-footed dame)

710

This opinion may be farther established from what follows in the latter end of this interview, where Achilles asks Priam, how many days he would request for the interment of Hector ? Achilles had refused to give over the war, but yet consents to intermit it a few days ; and then the sense will be this : “ I will not consent to return home, but ask a time for a cessation, and it shall be granted.” And what most strongly speaks for this interpretation is the answer of Priam ; I ask, says he, eleven days to bury my son, and then let the war commence again, since *it must be so*, εἴπερ ἀνάγκη ; since you necessitate me to it ; or since you will not be persuaded to leave these shores.

ψ. 706. *While kindling anger sparkled in his eyes.*] The reader may be pleased to observe that this is the last fallacy of the resentment of Achilles ; and the poet judiciously describes him moderating it by his own reflection : so that his reason now prevails over his anger, and the design of the poem is fully executed.

ψ. 709, 710. *For know, from Jove my Goddess mother came.*] The injustice of La Motte's criticism, (who blames Homer for representing Achilles so mercenary, as to inquire into the price offered for Hector's body before he would restore it) will appear plainly from this passage, where he makes Achilles expressly say, it is not for any other reason that he delivers the body, but that heaven had directly commanded it. The words are very full.

-----Διόθεν δέ μοι ἄγγελος ἦλθε
Μήτηρ ἥ μ' ἔτεκεν, θυγάτηρ αἰλίοιο γέροντος,
Καὶ δέ σε γινώσκω Πρίαμε φρεσὶν, ὃδὲ με λήθεις,
“Ὅτ' ἰε θεῶν τις ἦγε θεὰς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν.

Nor com'st thou but by heav'n; nor com'st alone,
 Some God impels with courage not thy own:
 No human hand the weighty gates unbarr'd,
 Nor could the boldest of our youth have dar'd
 To pass our out-works, or elude the guard. } 715

Cease; lest neglectful of high Jove's command
 I show thee, king! thou tread'st on hostile land;
 Release my knees, thy suppliant arts give o'er,
 And shake the purpose of my soul no more.

The fire obey'd him, trembling and o'er-aw'd. 720
 Achilles, like a lion, rush'd abroad:

Automedon and Alcimus attend,
 (Whom most he honour'd, since he lost his friend;)
 These to unyoke the mules and horses went,
 And led the hoary herald to the tent; 725

Next heap'd on high the num'rous presents bear
 (Great Hector's ransom) from the polish'd car.

Two splendid mantles, and a carpet spread,
 They leave; to cover, and inwrap the dead.

Then call the handmaids with assistant toil 730

To wash the body and anoint with oil;

Apart from Priam, lest th' unhappy fire
 Provok'd to passion, once more rouse to ire

The stern Pelides; and nor sacred age

Nor Jove's command, should check the rising rage. 735

This done, the garments o'er the corse they spread;

Achilles lifts it to the fun'ral bed:

Then, while the body on the car they laid,

He groans, and calls on lov'd Patroclus' shade.

If, in that gloom which never light must know, 740
 The deeds of mortals touch the ghosts below:
 O friend! forgive me, that I thus fulfill
 (Restoring Hector) heav'n's unquestion'd will.
 'The gifts the father gave, be ever thine,
 To grace thy manes, and adorn thy shrine. 745

He said, and ent'ring, took his seat of state,
 Where full before him rev'rend Priam fate:
 To whom, compos'd, the God-like chief begun.
 Lo! to thy pray'r restor'd, thy breathless son;
 Extended on the fun'ral couch he lies; } 750
 And soon as morning paints the eastern skies,
 The sight is granted to thy longing eyes. }
 But now the peaceful hours of sacred night
 Demand refection, and to rest invite:
 Nor thou, O father! thus consum'd with woe, 755
 The common cares that nourish life, forego.
 Not thus did Niobe, of form divine,
 A parent once, whose sorrows equall'd thine:

ψ. 757. *Not thus did Niobe, etc.*] Achilles, to comfort Priam, tells him a known history, which was very proper to work this effect. Niobe had lost all her children, Priam had some remaining. Niobe's had been nine days extended on the earth, drowned in their blood, in the sight of their people, without any one presenting himself to interr them: Hector has likewise been twelve days, but in the midst of his enemies; therefore it is no wonder that no one has paid him the last duties. The gods at last interred Niobe's children, and the gods likewise are concerned to procure honourable funerals for Hector. Eustathius.

Six youthful sons, as many blooming maids,
 In one sad day beheld the Stygian shades ; 762
 These by Apollo's silver bow were slain,
 Those, Cynthia's arrows stretch'd upon the plain.
 So was her pride chastiz'd by wrath divine,
 Who match'd her own with bright Latona's line ;
 But two the Goddess, twelve the queen enjoy'd ; 765
 Those boasted twelve th' avenging two destroy'd.
 Steep'd in their blood, and in the dust outspread,
 Nine days neglected lay expos'd the dead ;
 None by to weep them, to inhume them none ;
 (For Jove had turn'd the nation all to stone :) 770
 The Gods themselves at length relenting, gave
 Th' unhappy race the honours of a grave.
 Herself a rock, (for such was heav'n's high will)
 Thro' desarts wild now pours a weeping rill ;
 Where round the bed whence Achelous springs, 775
 The wat'ry fairies dance in mazy rings,
 There high on Sipylus his shaggy brow,
 She stands her own sad monument of woe ;
 The rock for ever lasts, the tears for ever flow.

Such griefs, O king ! have other parents known ; 780
 Remember theirs, and mitigate thy own.
 The care of heav'n thy Hector has appear'd,
 Nor shall he lie unwept, and uninterr'd ;
 Soon may thy aged cheeks in tears be drown'd,
 And all the eyes of Ilion stream around. 785

He said, and rising, chose the victim ewe
 With silver fleece, which his attendants slew.

The limbs they sever from the reeking hide,
 With skill prepare them, and in parts divide :
 Each on the coals the sep'rate morsels lays, 790
 And hasty, snatches from the rising blaze.
 With bread the glitt'ring canisters they load,
 Which round the board Automedon bestow'd :
 The chief himself to each his portion plac'd,
 And each indulging shar'd in sweet repast. 795
 When now the rage of hunger was repress'd,
 The wond'ring hero eyes his royal guest :
 No less the royal guest the hero eyes,
 His god-like aspect and majestic size ;
 Here, youthful grace and noble fire engage, 800
 And there, the mild benevolence of age.

ψ. 798. *The royal guest the hero eyes, etc.*] The poet omits no opportunity of praising his hero Achilles, and it is observable that he now commends him for his more amiable qualities : he softens the terrible idea we have conceived of him, as a warrior, with several virtues of humanity ; and the angry, vindictive soldier is become calm and compassionate. In this place he makes his very enemy admire his personage, and be astonished at his manly beauty. So that though courage be his most distinguishing character, yet Achilles is admirable both for the endowments of mind and body.

Ἐπιεφλομέων. The sense of this word differs in this place from that it usually bears ; it does not imply *τραχύτητα ὕβρισιν*, any reproachful asperity of language, but *εἰσηγησιν ψευδῆς φόβου*, the raising of a false fear in the old man, that he might not be concerned at his being lodged in the outermost part of the tent ; and by this method he gives Priam an opportunity of going away in the morning without observation. Eustathius.

Thus gazing long, the silence neither broke,
(A solemn scene!) at length the father spoke.

Permit me now, belov'd of Jove! to sleep
My careful temples in the dew of sleep: 805

For since the day that number'd with the dead
My hapless son, the dust has been my bed,
Soft sleep a stranger to my weeping eyes,
My only food, my sorrows and my sighs!

Till now, encourag'd by the grace you give, 810
I share thy banquet, and consent to live.

With that, Achilles bad prepare the bed,
With purple soft, and shaggy carpets spread;
Forth, by the flaming lights, they bend their way,
And place the couches, and the cov'rings lay. 815

Then he: now father sleep, but sleep not here.
Consult thy safety, and forgive my fear,
Lest any Argive (at this hour awake,
To ask our counsel, or our orders take)
Approaching sudden to our open'd tent, 820
Perchance behold thee, and our grace prevent.

ψ. 819. *To ask our counsel, or our orders take.*] The poet here shews the importance of Achilles in the army; though Agamemnon be the general, yet all the chief commanders apply to him for advice: and thus he promises Priam a cessation of arms for several days, purely by his own authority. The method that Achilles took to confirm the truth of the cessation, agrees with the custom which we use at this day, he gave him his hand upon it.

-----χεῖρα γέροντος

Ελλαθε δειξίτην.

Eustathius.

Should such report thy honour'd person here,
 The king of men the ransom might defer;
 But say with speed, if ought of thy desire
 Remains unask'd; what time the rites require 825
 T' interr thy Hector? For, so long we stay
 Our slaughter'ring arm, and bid the hosts obey.

If then thy will permit (the monarch said)
 To finish all due honours to the dead,
 This, of thy grace accord: to thee are known 830
 The fears of Ilion, clos'd within her town,
 And at what distance from our walls aspire
 The hills of Ide, and forests for the fire.
 Nine days to vent our sorrows I request,
 The tenth shall see the fun'ral and the feast: 835
 The next, to raise his monument be giv'n;
 The twelfth we war, if war be doom'd by heav'n!

This thy request (reply'd the chief) enjoy:
 Till then, our arms suspend the fall of Troy.

Then gave his hand at parting, to prevent 840
 The old man's fears, and turn'd within the tent;
 Where fair Briseis bright in blooming charms
 Expects her hero with desiring arms.
 But in the porch the king and herald rest,
 Sad dreams of care yet wand'ring in their breast. 845
 Now gods and men the gifts of sleep partake;
 Industrious Hermes only was awake,
 The king's return revolving in his mind,
 To pass the ramparts, and the watch to blind.

The pow'r descending hover'd o'er his head: 850
 And sleep'ft thou, father! (thus the vision said)
 Now doft thou sleep, when Hector is reftor'd?
 Nor fear the Grecian foes, or Grecian lord?
 Thy prefence here fhould ftern Atrides fee,
 Thy ftill-furviving fons may fue for thee, 855
 May offer all thy treasures yet contain,
 To fpare thy age; and offer all in vain.

Wak'd with the word, the trembling fire arofe,
 And rais'd his friend: the God before him goes,
 He joins the mules, directs them with his hand, 860
 And moves in filence thro' the hostile land.
 When now to Xanthus' yellow fream they drove,
 (Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove)
 The winged deity forfook their view,
 And in a moment to Olympus flew. 865
 Now fhed Aurora round her faffron ray,
 Sprung thro' the gates of light, and gave the day:
 Charg'd with their mournful load, to Ilion go
 The fage and king, majestically flow.
 Cassandra firft beholds, from Ilion's fpire, 870
 The fad proceffion of her hoary fire,
 Then, as the penfive pomp advanc'd more near,
 Her breathlefs brother ftretch'd upon the bier:
 A fhower of tears o'erflows her beauteous eyes,
 Alarming thus all Ilion with her cries. 875

Turn here your fteps, and here your eyes employ,
 Ye wretched daughters, and ye fons of Troy!

If e'er ye rush'd in crouds, with vast delight
 To hail your hero glorious from the fight;
 Now meet him dead, and let your sorrows flow! 880
 Your common triumph, and your common woe.

In thronging crouds they issue to the plains,
 Nor man, nor woman, in the walls remains,
 In ev'ry face the self-same grief is shown,
 And Troy sends forth one universal groan. 885
 At Scæa's gates they meet the mourning wain,
 Hang on the wheels, and grovel round the slain.
 The wife and mother, frantic with despair,
 Kiss his pale cheek, and rend their scatter'd hair:
 Thus wildly wailing, at the gates they lay; 890
 And there had sigh'd and sorrow'd out the day;
 But god-like Priam from the chariot rose;
 Forbear (he cry'd) this violence of woes,
 First to the palace let the car proceed,
 Then pour your boundless sorrows o'er the dead. 895

The waves of people at his word divide,
 Slow rolls the chariot thro' the following tide;
 Ev'n to the palace the sad pomp they wait:
 They weep, and place him on the bed of state.
 A melancholy choir attend around, 900
 With plaintive sighs, and music's solemn sound:

℣. 900. *A melancholy choir, etc.*] This was a custom generally received, and which passed from the Hebrews to the Greeks, Romans, and Asiatics. There were weepers by profession, of both sexes, who sung doleful tunes round the dead. Ecclesiasticus chap. xii. ℣. 5. *When a man shall go into the house of his eternity, there*

Alternately they sing, alternate flow

Th' obedient tears, melodious in their woe.

While deeper sorrows groan from each full heart,

And nature speaks at ev'ry pause of art. 905

First to the corse the weeping consort flew ;

Around his neck her milk-white arms she threw,

And oh my Hector ! Oh my Lord ! she cries,

Snatch'd in thy bloom from these desiring eyes !

shall encompass him weepers. It appears from St. Matthew xi. 17. that children were likewise employed in this office. Dacier.

ψ. 906, etc. *The lamentations over Hector.*] The poet judiciously makes Priam to be silent in this general lamentation ; he has already borne a sufficient share in these sorrows, in the tent of Achilles, and said what grief can dictate to a father and a king upon such a melancholy subject. But he introduces three women as chief mourners, and speaks only in general of the lamentation of the men of Troy, an excess of sorrow being unmanly : whereas these women might with decency indulge themselves in all the lamentation that fondness and grief could suggest. The wife, the mother of Hector, and Helen, are the three persons introduced ; and though they all mourn upon the same occasion, yet their lamentations are so different, that not a sentence that is spoken by the one, could be made use of by the other : Andromache speaks like a tender wife, Hecuba like a fond mother, and Helen mourns with sorrow rising from self-accusation : Andromache commends his bravery, Hecuba his manly beauty, and Helen his gentleness and humanity.

Homer is very concise in describing the funeral of Hector, which was but a necessary piece of conduct, after he had been so full in that of Patroclus.

Thou to the dismal realms for ever gone! 910

And I abandon'd, desolate, alone!

An only son, once comfort of our pains,

Sad product now of hapless love remains!

Never to manly age that son shall rise,

Or with encreasing graces glad my eyes: 915

For Ilion now (her great defender slain)

Shall sink a smoking ruin on the plain,

Who now protects her wives with guardian care?

Who saves her infants from the rage of war?

Now hostile fleets must waft those infants o'er, 920

(Those wives must wait 'em) to a foreign shore!

Thou too, my son! to barb'rous climes shalt go,

The sad companion of thy mother's woe;

Driv'n hence a slave before the victor's sword;

Condemn'd to toil for some inhuman lord. 925

Or else some Greek whose father prest the plain,

Or son, or brother, by great Hector slain,

In Hector's blood his vengeance shall enjoy,

And hurl thee headlong from the tow'rs of Troy.

For thy stern father never spar'd a foe: 930

Thence all these tears, and all this scene of woe!

Thence, many evils his sad parents bore,

His parents many, but his consort more.

Why gav'st thou not to me thy dying hand?

And why receiv'd not I thy last command? 935

ψ. 934. *Why gav'st thou not to me thy dying hand?*

And why receiv'd not I thy last command?

I have taken these two lines from Mr. Congreve, whose translation of this part was one of his first essays

Some word thou wouldst have spoke, which sadly dear,
 My soul might keep, or utter with a tear;
 Which never, never could be lost in air,
 Fix'd in my heart, and oft repeated there!

Thus to her weeping maids she makes her moan; 940
 Her weeping handmaids echo groan for groan.

The mournful mother next sustains her part.
 O thou, the best, the dearest to my heart!
 Of all my race thou most by heav'n approv'd,
 And by th' immortals ev'n in death belov'd! 945
 While all my other sons in barb'rous bands
 Achilles bound, and sold to foreign lands,
 This felt no chains, but went a glorious ghost
 Free, and a hero to the Stygian coast,
 Sentenc'd, 'tis true, by his inhuman doom, 950
 Thy noble corse was dragg'd around the tomb,
 (The tomb of him thy warlike arm had slain)
 Ungen'rous insult, impotent and vain!
 Yet glow'st thou fresh with ev'ry living grace,
 No mark of pain, or violence of face; 955
 Rosy and fair! as Phœbus' silver bow
 Dismiss'd thee gently to the shades below.

Thus spoke the dame, and melted into tears.
 Sad Helen next in pomp of grief appears:

in poetry. He has very justly rendered the sense of *ἡδύκρινον ἔπος*, *dictum prudens*, which is meant of the words of a dying man, or one in some dangerous exigence; at which times what is spoken is usually something of the utmost importance, and delivered with the utmost care: which is the true signification of the epithet *ἡδύκρινον* in this place.

Fast from the shining sluices of her eyes 960

Fall the round crystal drops, while thus she cries.

Ah dearest friend! in whom the Gods had join'd
The mildest manners with the bravest mind;
Now twice ten years (unhappy years) are o'er
Since Paris brought me to the Trojan shore; 965

(Oh had I perish'd, ere that form divine
Seduc'd this soft, this easy heart of mine!)

Yet was it ne'er my fate, from thee to find
A deed ungentle, or a word unkind:

When others curst the auth'refs of their woe, 970

Thy pity check'd my sorrows in their flow:

If some proud brother ey'd me with disdain,

Or scornful sister with her sweeping train,

Thy gentle accents soften'd all my pain.

For thee I mourn; and mourn my self in thee, 975

The wretched source of all this misery!

The fate I caus'd, for ever I bemoan;

Sad Helen has no friend now thou art gone!

Thro' Troy's wide streets abandon'd shall I roam!

In Troy deserted, as abhorr'd at home! 980

So spoke the fair, with sorrow-streaming eye:

Distressful beauty melts each stander-by;

On all around th' infectious sorrow grows;

But Priam check'd the torrent as it rose.

Perform, ye Trojans! what the rites require, 985

And sell the forests for a fun'ral pyre;

Twelve days, nor foes, nor secret ambush dread;

Achilles grants these honours to the dead.

He spoke ; and at his word, the Trojan train
 Their mules and oxen harness to the wain, 990
 Pour thro' the gates, and fell'd from Ida's crown,
 Roll back the gather'd forests to the town.
 These toils continue nine succeeding days,
 And high in air a sylvan structure raise.
 But when the tenth fair morn began to shine, 995
 Forth to the pile was born the man divine,
 And plac'd aloft : while all, with streaming eyes,
 Beheld the flames and rolling smokes arise.
 Soon as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
 With rosy lustre streak'd the dewy lawn ; 1000
 Again the mournful crouds surround the pyre,
 And quench with wine the yet-remaining fire,
 The snowy bones his friends and brothers place
 (With tears collected) in a golden vase ;
 The golden vase in purple palls they roll'd, 1005
 Of softest texture, and inwrought with gold.
 Last o'er the urn the sacred earth they spread,
 And rais'd the tomb, memorial of the dead.
 (Strong guards and spies, till all the rites were done,
 Watch'd from the rising to the setting sun) 1010
 All Troy then moves to Priam's court again,
 A solemn, silent, melancholy train :
 Assembled there, from pious toil they rest,
 And sadly shar'd the last sepulchral feast.
 Such honours Ilion to her hero paid, 1015
 And peaceful slept the mighty Hector's shade.

WE have now past through the Iliad, and seen the anger of Achilles, and the terrible effects of it, at an end: as that only was the subject of the poem, and the nature of epic poetry would not permit our author to proceed to the event of the war, it may perhaps be acceptable to the common reader to give a short account of what happened to Troy and the chief actors in this poem, after the conclusion of it.

I need not mention that Troy was taken soon after the death of Hector, by the stratagem of the wooden horse, the particulars of which are described by Virgil in the second book of the *Æneis*.

Achilles fell before Troy, by the hand of Paris, by the shot of an arrow in his heel, as Hector had prophesied at his death, *lib.* 22.

The unfortunate Priam was killed by Pyrrhus the son of Achilles.

Ajax, after the death of Achilles, had a contest with Ulysses for the armour of Vulcan, but being defeated in his aim, he slew himself through indignation.

Helen, after the death of Paris, married Deiphobus his brother, and at the taking of Troy betrayed him, in order to reconcile herself to Menelaus her first husband, who received her again into favour.

Agamemnon at his return was barbarously murdered by Ægisthus at the instigation of Clytæmnestra his wife, who in his absence had dishonoured his bed with Ægisthus.

Diomed after the fall of Troy was expelled his own country, and scarce escaped with life from his adulterous wife Ægiale; but at last was received by Daunus in Apulia, and shared his kingdom: it is uncertain how he died.

Nestor lived in peace with his children, in Pylos his native country.

Ulysses also, after innumerable troubles by sea and land, at last returned in safety to Ithaca, which is the subject of Homer's *Odysses*.

I must end these notes by discharging my duty to two of my friends, which is the more an indispensable piece of justice, as the one of them is since dead: the merit of their kindness to me will appear infinitely the greater, as the task they undertook was in its own nature, of much more labour, than either pleasure or reputation. The larger part of the extracts from Eustathius, together with several excellent observations, were sent me by Mr. Broome: and the whole essay upon Homer was written upon such memoirs as I had collected, by the late Dr. Parnell, archdeacon of Clogher in Ireland: how very much that gentleman's friendship prevailed over his genius, in detaining a writer of his spirit in the drudgery of removing the rubbish of past pedants, will soon appear to the world, when they shall see those beautiful pieces of poetry, the publication of which he left to my charge, almost with his dying breath.

For what remains, I beg to be excused from the ceremonies of taking leave at the end of my work; and from embarrassing myself, or others, with any defences or apologies about it. But instead of endeavouring to raise a vain monument to myself, of the merits or difficulties of it, (which must be left to the world, to truth, and to posterity) let me leave behind me a memorial of my friendship, with one of the most valuable men, as well as finest writers, of my age and country: one who has tried, and knows by his own experience, how hard an undertaking it is to do justice to Homer: and one, who (I am sure) sincerely rejoices with me at the period of my labours. To him therefore, having brought this long work to a conclusion, I desire to *dedicate* it; and to have the honour and satisfaction of placing together, in this manner, the names of Mr. CONGREVE, and of

March 25.

A. POPE.

1720.

Τῶν Θεῶν δὲ ὑποῖτα ----- τὸ μὴ ἐπὶ πλέον με προκύβαι ἐν Ποιητικῇ καὶ ἄλλοις ἐπιτηδεύμασι, ἐν οἷς ἴσως ἀν κατεσχέθην, εἰ ἡσθόμην ἐμαυτὸν εὐδῶς προΐοντα. M. AUREL. ANTON. *de seipso*, l. 1. §. 14.

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D			he strikes Hector	11	452
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A

POETICAL INDEX

T O

H O M E R's I L I A D.

The first number marks the book, the second the verse.

F A B L E.

THE great moral of the Iliad, that concord among governors, is the preservation of states, and discord the ruin of them; pursued through the whole fable.

The anger of Achilles breaks this union in the opening of the poem, *l.* 1. He withdraws from the body of the Greeks, which first interrupts the success of the common cause, *ibid.* The army mutiny, 2. The Trojans break the truce, 4. A great number of the Greeks slain, 7. 392. Forced to build fortifications to guard their fleet, *ibid.* In great distress from the enemy, whose victory is only stopt by the night, 8. Ready to quit their design, and return with infamy, 9. Send to Achil-

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For the rest of the Allegories see the System of the Gods as acting in their allegorical characters, under the article
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